

Exercise Stress Test

An **exercise stress test** shows your heart's response to exercise. The test records your heartbeat while you walk on a treadmill or ride a stationary bike. It can be done in a hospital, a test center, or a doctor's office. The test is also called a **stress electrocardiogram (ECG/EKG)**.

Before Your Test

- Be sure to mention the medications you take and ask if it's okay to take them before test.
- Avoid food and drinks containing caffeine.
- Don't eat, drink, smoke, or have any caffeine before the test. Get advise from the hospital on how long before the test you need to fast.

Getting Ready

- Wear flat, comfortable walking shoes.
- Wear a shirt, blouse, or sweater that you can remove easily. You may be asked to remove your clothing from the waist up. Women may wear a gown.

During Your Test

- Electrodes (small pads) are placed on your upper body and a blood pressure cuff on your arm. These are used to monitor your heartbeat and blood pressure during and after the test.
- You are shown how to use the treadmill or bike.
- You are then asked to exercise for several minutes. Expect the exercise to be easy at first. It will slowly get harder.
- Exercise as long as you can, or until you are asked to stop.



After the Test

- You can resume your normal activity.
- The results are sent to your doctor.
- Be sure to keep your follow-up appointment.

Report Any Symptoms

During the test, be sure to tell the health care provider if you feel any of the following:

- Chest, arm, or jaw discomfort
- Severe shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Dizziness
- Leg cramps or soreness