

## **NUCLEAR EXERCISE STRESS TEST**

Your physician has ordered a cardiac nuclear exercise stress test. This test is performed for many reasons. It is done to identify the cause of chest pain or chest discomfort, which can occur with blockages in blood flow to the heart; to monitor heart function in people with known heart disease; and to determine the response to medications or after angioplasty or bypass surgery. The nuclear stress test also involves taking pictures, also known as images, of your heart. A radioactive substance, known as a tracer, is injected into a vein in your arm and travels in the bloodstream to the heart. Areas of the heart receiving adequate blood flow pick up the traces more completely. When combined with exercise, the pictures can detect areas of the heart that are not receiving enough blood flow. This enables your physicians to determine your heart's response to exercise. The results assist the physician in managing your cardiac condition.

### **IMPORTANT!!!**

**\*\*\*DUE TO THE NATURE OF THE NUCLEAR STUDY A SPECIFIC DOSE IS ORDERED FOR EACH PATIENT. A \$250.00 FEE (\$200 dosage + \$50 no-show) WILL BE ASSESSED TO ANY PATIENT THAT FAILS TO APPEAR FOR THEIR APPOINTMENT OR DOES NOT GIVE A 24-HOUR APPOINTMENT CANCELLATION NOTICE (FOR ANY REASON). PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT 910-353-3000 NO LATER THAN 12:00 NOON THE PREVIOUS BUSINESS DAY PRIOR TO CANCEL OR RESCHEDULE.**

#### *How do I prepare for a nuclear exercise stress test?*

1. Please take all medications unless notified otherwise and DRINK AT LEAST 3 CUPS OF WATER THE MORNING OF THE TEST.
2. **Morning Appointment:** Do not eat past midnight prior to the day of the test.
3. **Afternoon Appointment:** You can eat a light breakfast (ie toast, eggs, cereal).
4. Withhold all caffeinated beverages, decaffeinated coffee, colas, teas, and chocolate for at least 12 hours (preferably 24 hours) prior to the test.
5. Do not smoke or use any form of nicotine for at least 12 hours (preferably 24 hours) prior to the test.
6. Do not apply lotions or powders to the chest.
7. Avoid heavy activity on the day of the test.
8. Wear loose, comfortable clothing and walking shoes; ladies may want to wear a front-buttoning, short sleeve shirt.

### *What happens during the stress test?*

#### **Rest portion**

You will be given an explanation of the test and asked to sign a consent form. A registered nuclear medicine technologist inserts an intravenous catheter into your hand or arm. A small amount of tracer is injected through the intravenous catheter. You lie flat on a special table under a large scanning camera. The camera takes pictures, called images, of your heart from several angles.

#### **Exercise portion (Treadmill or Drug-Induced)**

Electrodes are placed on your chest and connected by wires to the ECG machine, which permits continuous monitoring of your heart rhythm. A physician supervises the exercise portion of the test. You will be asked to walk on a treadmill.

**NOTE: \*Should you be unable to walk on a treadmill, a drug will be administered through your IV that will dilate the arteries and mimic the effects of exercise without the need of walking on a treadmill.**

The treadmill starts slowly, at first, and gradually increases in speed and incline. Your blood pressure is checked frequently, and your ECG is continually monitored. When you reach the point that you do not feel that you can exercise much longer, a second tracer is injected into the intravenous catheter. Typically, patients reach the injection point between 5-10 minutes. You will be asked to continue to exercise for one more minute to allow adequate uptake of the injected tracer. Report any symptoms, such as chest pain, shortness of breath, or dizziness. When the exercise portion is completed, your blood pressure and ECG will be monitored for several more minutes. Upon completion of the exercise portion of the test, your IV will be removed and you will lie under the camera for a second set of images.

**Please allow 3 – 3 ½ hours for the entire test to be completed.**

#### *When will I know the results of the nuclear stress test?*

Final interpretation of the test results is completed by a cardiologist with a speciality in nuclear medicine.

## **POLICY AGREEMENT FOR NUCLEAR EXERCISE STRESS TEST**

Due to the nature of the Nuclear Study, a specific dose is ordered for each patient. Recently, we have experienced an increase in patients not keeping their scheduled appointments or not giving a **24-hour appointment cancellation notice**.

It is our policy to charge a **\$250.00 fee (\$200 dosage + \$50 no-show)** for unkept Nuclear Stress Test appointments. To avoid these charges, if you need to cancel or re-schedule your appointment (for any reason) you must notify our office with **24-hour advance notice** (*no later than 12:00 noon the previous business day prior to testing*).

It is our goal to provide quality care for all of our patients. Please do your part by respecting this cancellation policy.

Thank you.

SeaCoast Cardiology Consultants, PLLC  
Garrett Rogers, M.D., FACC

Patient's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Witness \_\_\_\_\_