Exercise Test, Stress Test

An exercise stress test is a heart test (EKG) which is done while you are moving. You will walk on a treadmill. This test will tell your doctor how your heart does when it is forced to work harder and how much activity you can safely handle. A trained technician, a doctor, or physician assistant (PA) who specializes in heart disease will perform the test.

WHAT SHOULD I WEAR?

- Shorts or athletic pants.
- Comfortable tennis shoes.
- Women need to wear a bra that allows patches to be put on under it.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THE TEST?

- An EKG cable will be attached to your waist. This cable is hooked up to patches, which look like round stickers stuck to your chest.
- You will be asked to walk on the treadmill.
- You will walk until you are too tired or until you are told to stop.

HOW LONG WILL THE TEST LAST?

- It may last 30 minutes to 1 hour. The timing depends on your physical condition and the condition of your heart.
- Tell the doctor or PA right away if you have:
  - Chest pain.
  - Leg cramps.
  - Shortness of breath.
  - Dizziness.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE TEST?

- You will rest for about 6 minutes. During this time, your technician will check your heart rhythm and blood pressure.
- The testing equipment will be removed from your body and you can get dressed.
- You may go home or back to your hospital room. You may keep doing all your usual activities as directed by your doctor.

FINDING OUT THE RESULTS OF YOUR TEST

Ask your doctor when your test results will be ready. Make sure you follow up and get your test results.

Document Released: 06/05/2009 Document Re-Released: 03/14/2011
ExitCare® Patient Information ©2011 ExitCare, LLC.