Dobutamine Stress Echocardiogram, Dobutamine Stress Test with Echo

Your caregiver has scheduled you for a **Dobutamine Stress Test**. A **Dobutamine Stress Test** is a test used to check for heart disease in patients who are unable to exercise on a treadmill. Dobutamine is a medication that increases heart rate and blood pressure. These changes are similar to the effects of exercising and increase the oxygen demand of the heart. This test helps to determine if the heart muscle is getting enough blood and oxygen with this increase. The test includes an echocardiogram done at rest and again done at peak heart rate. An echocardiogram is a procedure which uses sound waves (ultrasound) to produce an image (picture) of the internal structures of the heart.

In order to produce an image of the heart, gel is applied to your chest and a *transducer* (a wand-like apparatus) is moved over the chest. Electrodes are placed on your chest to record an electrocardiogram (EKG) which will check your heart's rate and rhythm (regularity). If it looks like your heart is not getting enough blood to areas of the heart, the test is stopped. The test may also be stopped if blood pressure problems begin to develop.

This test will check how well the heart muscle and valves are working under stress (increased heart rate and blood pressure). It also checks the size of the *ventricles* (the pumping chambers of the heart). If your heart does not work normally, it may indicate coronary artery disease with poor coronary blood supply. The coronary arteries are the arteries which bring blood and oxygen to your heart.

PREPARATION FOR TEST

- You should be present fifteen minutes prior to your test or as directed. Check in at the admissions desk for filling out necessary forms if not pre-registered. There may be consent forms or other paperwork to sign prior to the procedure.
- Wear comfortable clothing and shoes.
- Do not apply lotions, powders, creams or oils on chest prior to test.
- Do not eat or drink for 6 hours prior to the test or as instructed.
- Do not smoke for four hours prior to the test.
- Take your medications as directed at regular times with water unless instructed otherwise. If you are on insulin, ask whether or not you should take it and if there are special instructions.
- If you are on a beta blocker, do not take this medication for 72 hours before the test unless your caregiver instructs you otherwise. Be sure to ask if you are not certain.

Try and get a good nights rest prior to your test. **Let your technologist know if you were unable to complete the preparations for your test or unable to follow the pre-test instructions.**

PROCEDURE

- The test takes a couple of hours.
- The procedure will be fully explained before or at the time of your testing.
- Multiple electrodes will be put on your chest. If you have a hairy chest, small areas may have to be shaved to get better contacts with the electrodes. Once the electrodes are attached to your body, multiple wires will be attached to the electrodes and in turn attached to the monitoring (EKG) computer or machine.
- An IV (intravenous) line will be started and Dobutamine will be administered by a nurse. Some common side effects of dobutamine include shortness of breath and nausea.
- Your caregiver will watch for problems such as an irregular heart beat or heart rate, or blood pressure problems.
- Following your test, your caregiver will go over your test results with you.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Resume your pre-hospital medications and diet unless instructed otherwise.
- Keep your follow-up appointments as instructed.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION IF YOU DEVELOP:

- Chest pain
- Pain radiating down your left arm
- *Nausea* (feeling sick to your stomach)
- Vomiting
- Fainting
- Shortness of breath
- Any other problems or concerns.

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