



## Exercise Nuclear Stress Test

This portion of the test is done after a series of pictures have been taken with your heart at rest. An exercise stress test is done while you walk on a treadmill or pedal a stationary bicycle. This allows us to learn how well your heart functions when it is being worked harder. You will step on the treadmill and hold onto the handrail before you begin walking. Once the treadmill belt starts, the speed and incline will increase every 3 minutes. Most patients walk between 6 and 12 minutes.

The treadmill test can last longer than 12 minutes depending on whether or not you are able to exercise longer.

Your blood pressure, EKG, and heart rate will be monitored continuously throughout the test. You will be given a second dose of the radioactive tracer through your IV when you are walking. After you are given the tracer you will need to continue to walk for one more minute on the treadmill to let the tracer circulate. The treadmill test will stop when:

- You get too tired to continue
- You exceed a "target" heart rate based on your age
- The cardiologist or cardio tech/nurse detects abnormal changes on your EKG
- You experience symptoms such as shortness of breath, chest pain, chest tightness, dizziness, etc. that do not permit you to exercise any longer
- Your blood pressure goes up too high

After the exercise portion of the test is over you will be helped to a stretcher. Your blood pressure and EKG will be monitored for another 5 to 10 minutes while you recover. Another set of images will be acquired after the tracer has circulated for an additional 30 – 90 minutes.

If the bicycle is used in place of the treadmill the resistance on the pedals will increase every 3 minutes but the rest of the procedure will remain as above.