

INSTRUCTIONS FOR A STRESS TEST

Date of Test: _____ Arrival Time: _____ Time of Test: _____

What is the purpose of a stress test?

The stress test is a diagnostic exam used to evaluate your heart rate and blood pressure response to exercise, the adequacy of blood supply to your heart muscle, and level of fitness.

How should I prepare for my stress test?

- ♥ **Please do not eat anything 2 hours prior to the test. You may have juice or water at anytime.** Diabetic patients may have a piece of dry toast and some fruit prior to the test. Consult your doctor as to your insulin dosage on that day.
- ♥ **Take your medications at your usual time**, unless your physician has indicated otherwise. Please bring a list of your current medications, as you may be asked for it.
- ♥ **Wear comfortable footwear** appropriate for brisk exercise on a treadmill or bicycle. Wear a short sleeve, button down shirt or a loose-fitting T-shirt. Slacks or shorts are preferred for comfortable exercise. You will work hard during the test, and towels are available if needed.
- ♥ **No family members and children** are allowed in the testing area, please make adequate arrangements!!
- ♥ **Please shower prior to your appointment** to reduce the spread of bacteria to our equipment.

What will I experience during the stress test?

You will be asked to read and sign a consent form. This form provides information regarding the benefits and risks of the stress test. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions you may have.

Your skin will be abraded in preparation for the electrodes that are placed on your chest. If you are allergic to latex, please inform the technician. These electrodes will be hooked up to a monitor so that your heart rate and rhythm can be watched closely throughout the test.

You will exercise by walking on a treadmill or pedaling a stationary cycle. Both modes of exercise will start out slowly and gradually increase in speed and/or resistance. Your heart rate and blood pressure will gradually rise. This is normal and both will be monitored along with your EKG. You will be encouraged to exercise for as long as you can, this will increase the accuracy of the test. If you experience symptoms, such as chest/arm discomfort, unusual shortness of breath, or lightheadedness, immediately inform the exercise physiologist monitoring the test. Adjustments will be made to the test, depending on your symptoms; blood pressure, heart rate, EKG, or degree of fatigue. Finally, you will be monitored for 6 minutes after the test until your heart rate, blood pressure, and EKG are within normal limits.