



CARDIOVASCULAR ASSOCIATES
— OF CHARLOTTESVILLE —

Patient Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Nuclear Stress Test - What to Expect

Your Provider, _____ has ordered a Nuclear Stress Test.

A Nuclear Exercise Stress Test is a diagnostic test used to evaluate blood flow to the heart. During the test a small amount of radioactive tracer is injected into a vein. A special camera, called a gamma camera, detects the radiation released by the tracer to produce computer images of the heart. The amount of radiation is very small. The images are taken before and after exercise. This usually involves walking on a treadmill at increasing levels of difficulty, while the electrocardiogram, heart rate and blood pressure are monitored.

- A nuclear medicine technologist will place an IV into a vein in your arm or hand and inject a small amount of radioactive tracer. The tracer is not a dye or contrast. After the tracer is injected, you will wait approximately 45 to 60 minutes before the first set of "resting" images are taken.
- Then you will be asked to lie very still under the gamma camera with arms above your head for approximately 20 minutes. The camera will record images that show blood flow through your heart at rest.
- A cardiac technician will place electrodes on your chest to monitor your EKG. The electrodes are attached to an electrocardiograph (ECG) monitor that records your heart's electrical activity during the test.
- You will start walking on a treadmill. At regular intervals, the difficulty of the exercise will increase until you achieve the target heart rate or you develop symptoms. A second dose of radioactive tracer will be injected into the IV at this time. Your heart rate, EKG and blood pressure will be monitored throughout the test. If you are unable to achieve your target heart rate, a medication may be given to simulate exercise.
- You will have a break after stressing for approximately 1 to 2 hours. You will again lie very still under the gamma camera with your arms over your head for approximately 20 minutes. The camera will record images that show blood flow through your heart during exercise. These images will be compared to the first set.

After the cardiologist reviews your test, the results will go into the electronic medical record at Cardiovascular Associates. Your referring provider will receive a copy of the results and will contact you to discuss them.

Patient/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____ Time _____