

Myocardial Perfusion Test - Stress

Patient information factsheet

What is a Nuclear Medicine scan?

- A nuclear medicine scan is a very common medical procedure.
- It uses small amounts of radioactive materials to show a specific organ.
- This helps your Doctor diagnose (find the problem) and, in some cases, treat some diseases.
- The scan uses a gamma camera to look for signs of disease. A gamma camera is a medical imaging device used to take pictures of what's happening inside the body.
- It shows the Doctor how well your organs are working. Other types of scans show what your organs look like.

What is a Myocardial Perfusion scan?

- A myocardial perfusion scan looks at the pumping action of your heart and the flow of blood to your heart muscle.
- It can help diagnose coronary heart disease and may also be used by doctors to find out if you'd benefit from a coronary angioplasty or coronary bypass surgery.
- This is usually a 2-day procedure, the rest scan and the stress scan.

Do I have to do anything to prepare for the stress scan?

- Please inform us if you weigh more than 100 kg.
- On the morning of your appointment, you are allowed to have a light breakfast, which must not contain eggs, meat, milk, margarine or butter.
- You will need to fast for three hours in between your breakfast and the appointment time.

- Diabetic patients should continue to eat normally and continue their treatment regime.
- You must not have any caffeine containing products for 12 hours prior to your appointment: this includes coffee (including “decaffeinated”), colas (Pepsi, Coke etc), tea, green tea, chocolate and some medications (“paracetamol PLUS” and cold & flu remedies). This is because caffeine prevents this scan from working.
- Please do not take the following drugs for 48 hours before your appointment: Dipyridamole/Persantin and Aminophylline/Theophylline/Phyllocontin.
- All other medication should be taken as routinely.
- You should bring your tablets and a list of your medications when you come for their appointment.

What happens on the day of the stress scan?

- Allow at least 3 hours for this procedure.
- This is usually the second day of the test and requires certain preparations.
- Instead of running on a treadmill, you will be given a drug, called Adenosine or Regadenoson, which mimics the effect of you doing exercise.

On arrival

- The stress procedure will be explained to you and a cannula (a thin tube), which allows access to your vein, will be inserted into your arm.
- Your blood pressure will be measured
- You will be connected to an ECG (electrocardiogram) machine so that we can monitor your heart.
- The stress part of the procedure will start, and you will be supervised by a medical consultant.
- You will be given an injection that mimics exercise and the radioactive tracer.

At least 30 minutes after the injection

- A scan of your chest will be done while you are lying down flat on your back.
- We need to position you with both arms over your head for this scan.

- Please let us know if you think you will have difficulty in maintaining this position.
- The scan takes about 15 minutes.
- We may need to re-scan you if the images are blurry or if there is any movement on it.
- You will be asked to drink a minimum of six cups of water before the scan to help with the quality of the images.

Is it dangerous?

- The scans are safe and painless.
- Only a tiny amount of radioactive tracer is used, so the risk from radiation is very small.
- If you have any worries or questions about the scan, please talk to your Doctor or contact the Nuclear Medicine department.

Is there anything you need to tell us before the scan?

- Before your appointment, tell the Nuclear Medicine Technologist or Radiographer if you might be pregnant or are breastfeeding.
- Please also tell us if you are very afraid of needles (needle phobia) or cannot lie down flat.

What happens after the scan?

- Drink lots of water.
- The radioactive tracer leaves your body through your pee (urine). Drinking lots of water will help get rid of it faster.
- **Do not have any blood or urine tests for 24 hours after your scan because the radioactive tracer may still be in your body.**
- Avoid close prolonged contact with children under 5 and anyone that might be pregnant for 24 hours.

How do I get my result?

- Once you have had both your rest scan and your stress scan, a Radiologist reviews (looks at) the scans and sends the report to the Specialist Doctor who asked for it. They will then contact you directly.
- This can take about 2 to 3 weeks.

Is there anything else I should know?

- You will need to lie down flat and stay still during the scan. Moving can make the pictures unclear.
- A low dose CT scan (computerized tomography) will be done to see your heart muscles.
- The CT scanner uses X-ray radiation to produce images.
- **Please do not bring anyone with you who is pregnant or under 18 years old.** This is because there are radioactive materials in the department.
- If you need an interpreter, please tell the Nuclear Medicine department, and they will arrange one for you.

Contact our service

Email: whh-tr.nuclearmedwhitthealth@nhs.net

Monday to Thursday, 9am to 5pm: 020 7288 5517.

Friday: Please call our mobile on 07747 037 143.

Contact our Trust

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern, please contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on **020 7288 5551** or whh-tr.PALS@nhs.net.

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet, please email whh-tr.patient-information@nhs.net. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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