



## WHY DO I NEED A STRESS TEST?

A stress test, sometimes called a treadmill test or exercise test, helps your doctor find out how well your heart handles work. As your body works harder during the test, it requires more fuel and your heart has to pump more blood. The test can show if there's a lack of blood supply through the arteries that go to the heart. The results of your stress test may help your doctor decide if you have heart disease, and if so, how severe it is. Taking a stress test also helps your doctor know the kind and level of exercise that's right for you.

## WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE TEST?

- You're hooked up to equipment to monitor your heart.
- It changes speeds to make you walk faster.
- You walk slowly in place on the treadmill.
- You can stop the test at any time if you need to.
- It tilts so you feel like you're going up a small hill.
- Afterwards you'll sit or lie down and your heart and blood pressure will be checked.

## WHAT IS MONITORED DURING THE TEST?

- Your heart rate
- Your electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG)
- Your breathing
- Your Blood Pressure
- How tired you feel

## IS THERE A RISK?

There is some risk, but no more than if you were to jog up a big hill. Of course, medical professionals are on hand with emergency equipment in case anything unusual happens during the test.

## WHAT EQUIPMENT IS USED?

- The electrocardiogram (e-lek-tro-KAR-de-o-gram) or ECG or EKG machine will record your heart beat through electrodes which will be hooked up to your chest and arms using adhesive pads.
- Small amounts of chest hair may be shaved if you are male.
- You will walk on a treadmill, similar to one in a Gym. The treadmill gradually increases speed and incline to make you work harder.
- An automatic or manual Blood pressure cuff will be placed around your arm to record your blood pressure during the test.

## HOW SHOULD I PREPARE?

- You do not need to take any special medicines before your test.
- You should take your usual medications EXCEPT if you take Digoxin (Lanoxin) you should not take your morning dose. Also, your doctor may ask that you not take your antihypertensive. Skip this ONLY if your doctor tells you to.
- Please bring all of the medicines you regularly take so the Nurse can be sure what you are using.
- You should wear comfortable clothing, such as a jogging suite.
- You should wear soft-soled shoes, such as tennis or walking shoes.
- Bring items to freshen up after the test.