



What is a Dobutamine Stress Test?

This is a type of test used to see if your heart muscle is getting the blood supply it needs. You will be given medicine through an intravenous tube (IV). The medicine is called Dobutamine.

Just like exercise, Dobutamine increases the work your heart does, and increases your heart rate. Once you get to a target heart rate, a radioactive material called Cardiolute is given through the IV. This material will allow pictures to be taken of your heart.

Why does my doctor want me to have this test?

Your doctor may order this test:

- If you have been having chest pain or shortness of breath. Your doctor will want to know if these symptoms are because of your heart.
- If you are about to have surgery, a stress test can help the doctor to see if your heart is strong enough to handle the stress of surgery.
- If you can't walk on a treadmill long enough to reach a certain heart rate to complete the test, your doctor will order this kind of stress test.

How do I prepare for the test?

You may have a light meal (such as toast or cereal, or a half sandwich with juice or milk) about 2 to 3 hours before the test.

You will need to be wearing comfortable clothes. Please, no 1 piece garments.

Some blood pressure medicines should not be taken 24 hours before the test such as beta-blockers. Some common beta-blockers are

Acebutolol (Sectral)	Bisoprolol	Metoprolol (Lopressor, Toprol, Betala)
Pindolol	Esmolol (Brevibloc)	Bitolterol
Atenolol (tenormin)	Celiprolol	Propranolol (Inderal)
Nadolol (Corgard)	Betaxolol (Kerlone)	Labetalol (Normadyne)
Timolol (Blocadren)	Carvedilol (Coreg)	Sotalol
Carteolol	Levobunolol	Levobetaxolo
Metipranolol	Betaxolo (Kerlone)	

Ask your doctor which medicines to stop taking before the test.

This test is not done if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

What happens during the stress test?

When you come to the Cardiology Department for your test we will ask you questions about your health history. After we explain the test to you, we will ask you to sign consent before the test is started.

Next we will place EKG patches on your chest. The patches are attached to small wires, which are connected to a machine. This allows your heart rate and rhythm to be monitored during the stress test.

A blood pressure cuff is put on your arm and a nurse will start an intravenous (IV) line for the medicine to be given. The dobutamine is given, and increased until a target heart rate is reached. As soon as the target heart rate is reached, you will be given Cardiolite, a radioactive material through your IV. You will wait 1 hour and then pictures will be taken.

The test ends when a certain heart rate is reached. The medicine leaves the body quickly. Within ten minutes your heart rate will be back to normal.

When the test is finished, the IV will be taken out, and most of the patches are removed. A few patches will be left on for the pictures that will be taken.

What happens during the rest portion of the test?

You will come to the Radiology Department and again you will get a dose of the radioactive material (Cardiolite), which makes your heart "glow" and show up on the pictures. You will wait 1 hour and then pictures will be taken.

What are the possible side effects?

You will not be alone during the test. If you develop any of these symptoms make sure you tell the nurse/doctor in the room with you.

- Flushed warm feeling
- Nausea or vomiting
- Abnormal heartbeat
- Chest Pain
- Headache
- Low blood pressure
- Dizziness

Any of these symptoms caused by the medicine can be taken care of before you leave the Cardiology Department.

How long does the test take?

If the test is done in 2 days, the stress test takes from 2 - 2 ½ hours. Plan on a 1-hour wait time between parts. The rest test takes about 1 hour.

If you do the exam in 1 day, it will take about 3 – 4 hours to complete. You will have some wait time between tests.

If you have any questions, please call the Cardiology Services at 756-3560.