



Pullman Regional Hospital Nuclear Medicine Department

What is a Cardiac Stress Test?

A Cardiac Stress Test is a noninvasive way to assess the blood flow to the heart muscle. We inject a nuclear tracer into the blood stream. The tracer is taken up by the heart muscle cells that receive good blood flow. We image the heart with a camera that senses gamma rays released by the tracer. This provides us with a map of where the blood flow to the heart is adequate.

Before your test

Do not eat or drink 4 hours before your exam.

Do not eat or drink anything that has caffeine 24 hours prior to your exam. This will interfere with the exam, resulting in the cancelation and rescheduling of your exam. This includes eating or drinking:

- Coffee, including decaf
- Chocolate of any kind
- Tea
- Soda
- Excedrin

Bring a list of current medications and doses.

If you are currently taking a beta-blocker medication please consult with your physician about discontinuing prior to this test.

During your test

Once you are registered and checked in at the Outpatient Services desk, a technician will come out to greet you and bring you to the nuclear medicine department. The exam will be explained and any questions you might have will be answered at this time.

An intravenous (IV) will be started in your arm then an imaging tracer will be injected into the IV. After a 30-minute wait, the technologist will take the first set of images using a Nuclear Medicine SPECT/CT camera. It will take approximately 20 min.

Next, you will be escorted to the Treadmill Lab for your stress test. The technician will apply EKG leads and a blood pressure cuff to your arm opposite your IV. You will be led on a treadmill and will exercise until achieving your target heart rate. Patients ordered to have a Pharmacology Stress Test will have an injection of a stress agent and continue as normal.

After your test

You can resume your regular activities with no restrictions. The technologist will not be able to give you any results; however, the results should be available to the doctor who ordered your test within one to two business days.

Thank you

We are honored that you have chosen Pullman Regional Hospital to serve your healthcare needs.