



WESSEX CARDIOLOGY

STRESS ECHOCARDIOGRAPHY

INFORMATION LEAFLET

Please do not eat, drink or smoke for 2 hours prior to the test. If you are taking beta blockers (**Atenolol, Bisoprolol, Metoprolol, Sotalol, Carvediolol, Propanolol, Labetalol, Nebivolol, Pindolol**) these should be stopped for 2 days before the appointment (including the day of the test). So if the test is on a Tuesday you should not take the beta blocker on Sunday or Monday. Please bring a list of your medication and allow up to 90 minutes for this appointment. You should wear appropriate footwear suitable for exercise.

There are two parts to this test. First some ultrasound pictures of your heart are taken using an echo machine. This is not harmful and requires you to lie on your left side on a couch. A piece of equipment called a probe is placed on your chest to obtain the pictures and requires the use of some jelly to ensure good contact between your skin and the probe.

In the second part of the test your heart is exercised or “stressed”. If you can walk easily, we use a treadmill for you to walk on. If you have difficulty walking we may decide to use medication to increase your heart rate. The medication is called “Dobutamine” and for this a small needle will be inserted into your arm. The medication is given via a drip for 10-15 minutes.

When your heart rate is increased to a satisfactory level we take further pictures of the heart and compare these to the resting pictures.

Your pulse, blood pressure and ECG are monitored during the test and if there are any problems the test may be stopped. Sometimes we may use some “dye” to help us obtain better pictures. This requires the use of a needle to be inserted and the dye itself is very safe.

Generally this test is very safe and there are usually no problems. There is a small risk of an abnormal heart beat, chest pain or nausea and if this happens appropriate action will be taken. Most people don't experience any serious side effects. The results will be usually be sent to the doctor who requested the test.

You should be able to go back to work the following day.