

## Preparation for your test

- **NO** alcohol, smoking, or caffeinated/decaffeinated foods or beverages for 24 hours prior to your test. (Caffeine is found in coffee, tea, chocolate, and most sodas. Decaffeinated products contain a small amount of caffeine that may interfere with the test)
- **NOTHING** to eat or drink after midnight the evening prior to your test.
- **DO** wear comfortable, loose clothing and appropriate exercise shoes.

This test may take up to three hours. At some point, you will be able to get something to eat or you can bring a snack.

## Medication instructions

If you take insulin, please take only 1/3 of your morning dose until after the test, then resume as usual.

- Do **NOT** take any nitrate medications such as nitroglycerine, nitro patches, imdur or isosorbide 12 hours prior to the test.
- Do **NOT** take Theophylline/Aminophylline two (2) days prior and day of test.
- Do **NOT** take Pletal the day prior or day of test.
- Do **NOT** take oral hypoglycemics the morning of the test.
- **DO** bring a list of your medications and doses with you.

If you have further questions about your medications or the nuclear stress test, please contact our office at 703.369.5959.

Patient \_\_\_\_\_

Date of test (Day 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
REGISTRATION TIME

Date of test (Day 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
REGISTRATION TIME

Additional testing \_\_\_\_\_

Office:  MANASSAS  WARRENTON  GAINESVILLE TIME

Return visit for results \_\_\_\_\_

Office:  MANASSAS  WARRENTON  GAINESVILLE TIME

**24-hour notice of cancellation is required to avoid being charged for the unused isotope.**

### Prince William Cardiology Associates

#### Nuclear Lab

(Two doors down from the main office)

8567-B Sudley Road

Manassas, Virginia 20110

703.369.5959 • Fax 703.369.7473

#### OFFICE LOCATIONS

##### Manassas

703-369-5959

8569-B Sudley Rd.

##### Warrenton

540-347-9898

380 Hospital Dr.

##### Gainesville

703-369-5959

7130 Heritage Village Plaza, Suite 102

# PRINCE WILLIAM Cardiology Associates

## Nuclear Stress Testing

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PRINCE WILLIAM  
**Cardiology Associates**

*We put our hearts into treating yours*

## *We put our hearts into treating yours!*

A stress test is a test to estimate the amount of blood reaching the heart muscle during rest and exercise. It is typically done for a variety of reasons such as to determine the cause of unexplained chest pain or to determine the location and amount of injured heart muscle after a heart attack.

## *Two types of Nuclear Stress Tests*

Your heart will be stressed either through exercise with a treadmill Nuclear Stress Test or through medication with a Pharmacological Nuclear Stress Test. The latter causes your heart to react as if you are being exercised.

The test may take up to three hours.

## *What happens during a Nuclear Test?*

For this test, a radioactive substance called a tracer is injected into a vein in your arm. The radioactive tracer is often thallium or technetium sestamibi (Cardiolite). Once the radioactive tracer has been injected into the bloodstream, a gamma camera is used to view the amount of the tracer that reaches the heart muscle. As the tracer moves through the heart muscle, areas that have good blood flow absorb the tracer.

If an area of heart muscle does not adequately absorb the tracer, it means that either the blood flow is reduced (ischemia) or there has been a previous heart attack. The tracer remains in the body temporarily (less than a day) before it is eliminated, usually in the urine or stool (feces).

Stress thallium scans often involve making two sets of images: rest images and stress images. Rest images are taken while the person is at rest and stress images are taken after the heart has been stressed either through exercise (treadmill) or by using a medication called adenosine, dipyridamole (Persantine), or dobutamine (Dobutrex).

The resting images and the stress images are then compared. Medication stress testing may be done instead of exercise stress testing for older adults and people with conditions that may make exercise difficult, such as those who are obese or those with COPD, peripheral vascular disease, spinal cord injury, arthritis, or multiple sclerosis.

The above protocol is subject to change at the discretion of the physician.

## *The purpose of a Stress Test*

- Determine whether poor blood flow (ischemia) is present in a person experiencing chest pain.
- Evaluate the location and amount of permanent damage caused by a heart attack.
- Help determine whether a person with CAD should be treated with angioplasty or bypass surgery.
- Diagnose coronary artery disease (CAD).
- Estimate the risk of surgery (other than heart surgery) that can cause a cardiac complication.

- Check for adequate blood flow to the heart after cardiac catheterization, heart bypass surgery, angioplasty, atherectomy or medication to dissolve a clot (thrombolytic therapy).

## *Common questions*

- Is it safe? There is little risk and medical professionals are present to respond to any unusual happening.
- What about radiation? The risk from radiation exposure is comparable to that of a chest x-ray.
- Will I need other tests? The results of the exercise test may suggest to your doctor that you need further studies. The results may also eliminate the need for further studies.
- What should I wear? Comfortable clothes and shoes.
- When will my doctor have the results? Reports are usually provided to the referring doctor within 48 hours.

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