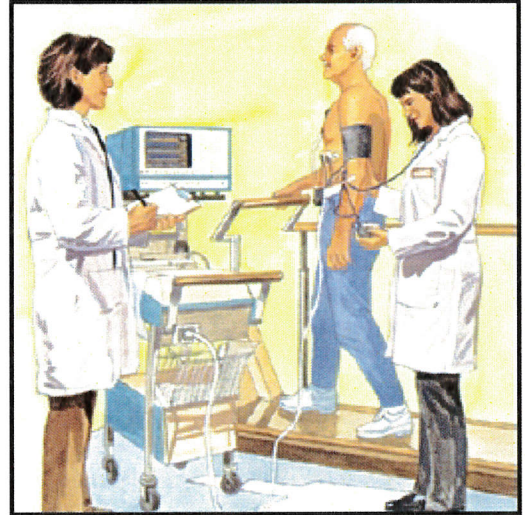


Stress Echocardiography (Echo)

Stress echocardiography is also called stress echo. It is a test that records pictures of your heart before and after you exercise. During activity, your heart has to work harder to send oxygen-rich blood throughout your body. This test helps your doctor see whether your heart is working well when you are active. Allow at least 1-2 hours for the test from the time you arrive to when you can leave.

Before Your Test

- When you schedule your test, mention all medications you take. Ask if it's okay to take them before your test. Please do not take any beta blockers either the night before or the day of your test. If you are diabetic, please discuss this with your doctor so you can get further instruction about your medication and diet in preparation for the test.
- For 4 hours before the test, don't eat, drink, smoke, or have any caffeine.
- Wear flat, comfortable walking shoes.
- Wear a top you can take off easily. You may be asked to remove your clothing from the waist up. If you are a woman, you will be given a hospital gown to wear.



During Your Test

Echo uses a transducer (a small device that produces sound waves). It sends images of your heart to a video monitor. The images are recorded.

- A special gel is put on your chest. The transducer is moved over the gel. This records your heart at rest.
- Your blood pressure is taken. An **electrocardiogram** (EKG) is also done. This test involves small pads called electrodes. They are placed on your chest. The EKG reads the pattern of your heartbeat.
- Next, you're asked to walk on a treadmill or pedal a stationary bike. You'll do this until your heart beats rapidly. **Note:** If you are not able to exercise, you'll be given a drug to get your heart working harder.
- You stop exercising. Right away, the transducer is used to take a second set of video images of your heart. Your doctor compares these images to the first ones taken.

During the test, be sure to tell the HCP if you feel any chest, arm, or jaw discomfort. Also mention if you have severe shortness of breath, feel very tired, or feel dizzy.

After the Test

You can go back to your normal daily routine. Be sure to keep your follow-up appointment with your doctor to discuss test results.