

Your Guide To: **SPECT Nuclear Perfusion**



How do I prepare for the test

YOU MAY NOT HAVE CAFFEINE FOR 12 HOURS PRIOR TO THE TEST. This includes caffeinated soft drinks, tea, coffee (including decaf), chocolate, Excedrin, Anacin, Butalbital, Fioricet, and some other migraine medications. Call if you are unsure about what medications you can take.

DO NOT EAT THREE HOURS BEFORE THE TEST. YOU MAY DRINK WATER ONLY.

If you are scheduled for blood work on the same day, you must not eat or drink anything after midnight. If you are a diabetic, you may bring a snack and your medications to take once instructed. Call if you are unsure about your diabetes medication.

Aggrenox should be held 48 hours before the test.

Take no Theophylline based medications 24 hours prior to the test. Some of these medicines are:

- Pentoxifylline
- Theo-Dur
- Trental
- Theophylline
- Theolair
- Uniphyl



WE UNDERSTAND THAT INSTRUCTIONS ABOUT MEDICATIONS CAN BE CONFUSING.

Please call the office in advance if you have any questions about what medicines you should take on the day of the test.

It may be necessary for you to undergo a pregnancy test prior to the nuclear perfusion study. This will be reviewed when you arrive in the nuclear medicine department for your procedure.

Medication should be taken as instructed by your physician or nurse when testing was scheduled.

What should I wear

Since you will be exercising during the procedure, you should dress comfortably. Loose two-piece clothing and walking shoes are important.

What takes place during the procedure?

The myocardial perfusion study consists of three parts. First, pictures will be taken of your heart while you are at rest. Secondly, you will be asked to exercise, and during part three more pictures of your heart will be taken. **The entire test takes approximately 2-3 hours.** **However, in certain situations it may be required to be done over a 2 day period.** It is important that you understand any instructions given. Don't hesitate to ask questions if you need more information.

What is a SPECT nuclear perfusion study?

A myocardial or "nuclear" perfusion study is a way of checking blood flow to the muscles or walls of your heart. The study requires that a small amount of radioactive material be given to you through an IV. A special camera is then used to take pictures of this material as it travels through your heart muscle.

Is the study safe?

Nuclear medicine procedures are very safe. Ten to 12 million of them are performed every year in the U.S. alone. Our well-trained professionals adhere to all required guidelines. The radiation that you are exposed to is about the same dose as you would receive during a routine x-ray. Your body eliminates the radioactive material very quickly.

What does the study Detect?

This study can be used to detect the presence of coronary artery disease (CAD) and how it affects your heart. CAD is caused by a buildup of fatty materials in your arteries. This buildup blocks the blood flow that your heart needs to function properly.

Without proper notification of a cancellation by 2 p.m. on the day before your appointment, you will be billed \$25 for the radioactive medication that was ordered on your behalf.

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PART ONE: Resting Pictures

An IV will be started in your arm so that the radioactive material can be injected. You will not feel any different while receiving the radioactive material. The IV will remain in place throughout the study. Pictures will be taken of your heart while you are at rest. It is important to lie very still. This portion of the study will take about 12 to 15 minutes to complete. The quality of the pictures will be checked, and then you will move on to part two.

PART TWO: Exercise Pictures

EKG electrodes will be placed on your chest. Your heart and blood pressure will be monitored as you exercise on a treadmill. The level of difficulty will be increased about every three minutes. It is important that you exercise for as long as possible to ensure best possible results. At the peak of your exercise, radioactive material will again be injected through the IV. After this injection you will continue exercising for one to two minutes. EKG and blood pressure readings will be taken for five minutes after exercise is complete.

What if I am unable to exercise?

It may be determined that a medication which mimics exercise is a better choice for you. This medication will take the place of the treadmill. If you notice any changes in the way you feel while you are receiving this medication, please notify the person who is closely monitoring your test. Most symptoms include little shortness of breath or some chest tightness; these are normal and generally fade very quickly. You may be asked to do some low-level activity (walking very slowly on a treadmill or swinging legs over side of bed or chair) to help minimize the side effects from the medication. This exercise portion of the study takes about one minute.

PART THREE: After Exercising

You will be connected to a heart monitor and we will take pictures of what your heart looks like under stress conditions. Again, it will be necessary for you to stay very still while these pictures are taken. This stage will take approximately 10 to 12 more minutes. The pictures will be checked for quality before you leave. They are then sent to your physician to be reviewed.

When will I get results?

Once you have completed your study, before you leave the clinic, we will let you know when and how you can expect to receive your results.

Please note!

If you are not properly prepared, we may have to postpone your study. Please read the contents of this brochure and follow all directions. Be sure to have all of your questions answered to ensure that the process goes smoothly.

If there is any chance that you could be pregnant, please inform the technologist performing the test immediately.

The radioactive material used in these tests has been ordered specifically for you. If you find it necessary to cancel your appointment, it is very important to notify CIS by 2 p.m. on the day before your appointment.

Without proper notification of a cancellation by 2 p.m. on the day before your appointment, you will be billed \$25 for the radioactive medication that was ordered on your behalf.