

# EASTERN SHORE HEART CENTER

## Nuclear Stress Test

Someone from our office will call the day before the test to confirm you will be here.

We ONLY order the tracer if your appointment has been confirmed verbally the day before.

The dosage is timed and ordered the evening before your test. We must have 24 hour notice if you are unable to keep this appointment.

### ***What is a Nuclear Stress Test?***

A nuclear stress test is a test used to evaluate the blood flow through the coronary arteries into the muscle of the heart. With the use of a small amount of a radioactive tracer and a special type of radiation detection camera, the cardiologist is able to evaluate the blood flow by reviewing a set of images demonstrating the distribution of the radiotracer within the muscle of the heart.

### ***How is the test done?***

The test is generally done in two phases: 1. Resting phase 2. Stressed phase. Each phase requires an injection of the radiotracer followed by a set of images of the heart in order to demonstrate the distribution of the tracer at the time of the injection.

The Nuclear Medicine Technologist (an individual trained in the field of nuclear medicine) will start an I.V., either on the back of the hand or at the bend of the elbow. This I.V. access allows for the injection of the radioactive tracer.

The first phase injection is made with the heart at a “resting” state with a set of images taken 30-45 minutes after the injection. The second phase injection is made during the physical treadmill stress test or a chemical drug induced non-physical stress test. The cardiologist will determine the type of stress test that is best for you. In cases where patients are unable to achieve adequate exercise on the treadmill, the chemical stress test is sometimes the test of choice. After the stress test, a second set of images is taken, usually 15 minutes to one hour after injection of the tracer. Depending on the study, each set of images takes between 12 to 17 minutes in a sitting position. The main point to emphasize is that it is very important to be extremely still while the camera takes the images.

### ***What is the preparation for the test?***

1. *We ask that you eat a light meal ONLY (toast, oatmeal, cereal, juice and/or water). ABSOLUTELY NO COFFEE OR TEA including decaf or any foods containing caffeine, like chocolates, 12 hours prior to the test.*
2. **Do not take your morning medicines, unless instructed to do so, but do bring them with you. You may take medicine as soon as the test is complete.**
3. **Wear comfortable clothing, walking or tennis shoes.**
4. **If you use inhalers for asthma or lung disease, bring them with you.**
5. **SOMEONE FROM THE OFFICE WILL CALL THE DAY BEFORE TO CONFIRM.**

### ***How long does the test take?***

Plan to spend two to three hours with us to complete the test.