

APPOINTMENT DATE AND TIME: _____

WHAT IS IT?

Nuclear medicine cardiac imaging involves the injection of small amounts of radioactive material into the blood-stream through a vein in your arm. These materials travel to the heart and allow our camera to “see” the heart muscle. The amount of radioactive material used is small, has no side effects and poses no risk to you.

WHY AM I HAVING IT DONE?

Your doctor is always the best person to ask about why a particular test has been ordered for you, but the nuclear cardiology tests are useful. It may help us to determine the cause of your chest discomfort or pain. It may also help us to see if your heart muscle has been previously damaged and to evaluate the extent of that damage.

We can also find out how efficiently your heart is pumping blood to the rest of your body.

HOW IS IT DONE?

This is a two-part test. First, a nurse or technologist will explain the test in more detail, and place an intravenous (IV) line in a vein in your arm. You are then given an injection of a radioactive material through the IV, which lets us see your heart with our camera.

After this, you will wait approximately 15-30 minutes before we take your pictures. For these pictures, you lie flat on your back with your arms resting above your head. This takes approximately 20 minutes. The next part of the test is the “stress” part of the test where you perform an exercise (treadmill) test or are given a medication. This medication is used for people that cannot exercise well on a treadmill.

If you exercise, a radioactive material is injected through your IV when you are on the treadmill and pictures are taken later after you have finished working on the treadmill.

If you are given the medication instead of exercising, the medication is injected through your IV slowly. Another radioactive material is injected during the medication infusion and you are monitored for about 10 minutes. Some people become uncomfortable with the medication and experience headache, chest discomfort, shortness of breath, or other minor side effects. These side effects are very short-lived and go away within minutes after the medication is finished. Another set of pictures is taken after this part of the test is finished. The entire test can take from 2-3 hours to complete. In rare cases, it may take a little longer.

This two-part test may be split up into 2 different days for some larger patients.

HOW DO I PREPARE FOR THE TEST?

1. Wear comfortable clothes and shoes — it helps if women wear pants, especially if exercising.
It is also best NOT to wear shirts with metal buttons or big necklaces.
2. Do not eat for 6 hours before the test, although sips of water are o.k.
3. Do not smoke 24 hours before the test.
4. Do not drink any beverages containing caffeine for 24 hours before the test.
This includes ALL coffees and caffeinated sodas (even decaf!), and chocolate.
5. Hold certain medications as instructed by your doctor.
6. Bring your medications, OR a LIST of these medications, with you to the test.

QUESTIONS?

Feel free to ask any questions you may still have and we will be happy to discuss them with you. All of us at Southern Oregon Cardiology are committed to providing you with the finest medical care available. **Phone: 541-282-6606**

MEDICATIONS TO HOLD: