

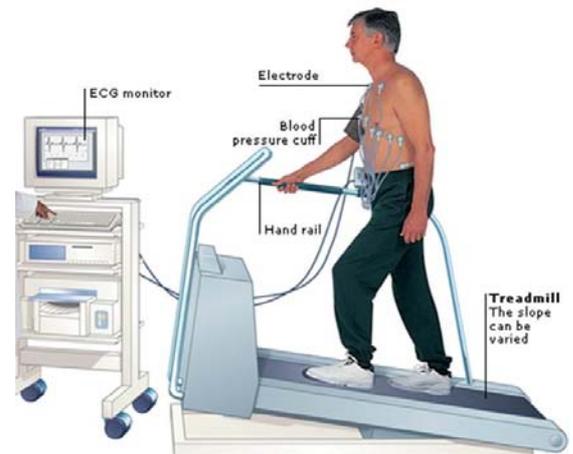
## Exercise ECG Test

### ***What is an Exercise Test?***

Exercise Tests (Stress Tests) are just one of the ways the heart can be stressed. Exercise testing measures the performance and capacity of the heart, lungs and blood vessels during exercise. In most cases, the test is carried out to assist in diagnosis of coronary heart disease. This test can also be used to evaluate capacity to undertake physical activity and in the planning of an appropriate training program.

### ***How is it done?***

The test uses a treadmill to assess the heart's response to exercise. The exercise test is performed by a Doctor and a cardiac technologist, who will monitor your heart rate, blood pressure and electrocardiogram (ECG) during slowly increasing levels of exercise.



### ***What do I do on the day?***

Please present yourself at the Reception desk at the Heart Centre, 3rd Floor, Phillip Block. Please bring your Medicare Card and the Referral from your doctor (if not already faxed)

### ***Can I eat and drink before my test?***

Consume only light meals on the day of appointment. Do not eat 1 hour before the test.

### ***Do I take my medications on the day of the test?***

Please ask your referring Doctor if you need to stop any medication

### ***What do I wear for the test?***

Comfortable walking shoes, shorts, tracksuit or loose comfortable trousers.

### ***What happens during the test?***

Small sticky electrodes will be placed on your chest and back to monitor your heart rate and rhythm during the test. Your blood pressure will also be recorded during the test. Before the test begins, you will be examined by the Doctor and a resting ECG will be recorded.

Testing is done by walking on a treadmill. The speed and slope will be increased every 3 minutes- You will be required to walk uphill for up to 15 minutes or until your heart reaches a good level of exercise for your age group (Target heart rate).

The test is stopped if you reach your target heart rate or earlier if you develop chest pain, fatigue, breathlessness, other limiting symptoms, or if changes on the ECG concern the Doctor.

***It is important to tell the Doctor if you are feeling unwell in any way or if you want to stop.***

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

Approximately 1 hour.

***What are the risks?***

Exercise stress testing is usually performed on patients with known or suspected heart disease. Complications are uncommon but may still occur. Emergency equipment and trained personnel are available to deal with any situation.

**Major complications are rare:**

Significant disturbance of heart rhythm	2 or 3 in 10,000 tests
Prolonged angina (heart pain) or heart attack	2 or 3 in 10,000 tests.
Death	1 in 10, 000 tests.

The risk of major complications and death may be higher in patients who have severe heart disease.

The Doctor performing the test will take this into account before commencing the study. Please feel free to discuss these issues prior to agreeing to undergo the exercise test.

***How will I get my results?***

At the end of the exercise test the Doctor will discuss the results with you and explain what the results mean. If the test is positive (ie. indicating coronary artery disease), the follow up plan will be reviewed.

A copy of your results will be posted to your referring Doctor and you will be advised to make an appointment with this Doctor in the following 1-2 weeks. Alternatively, an appointment at the Heart Centre Cardiology Clinic can be made for you.