



Exercise Thallium Scan Outpatient instruction sheet

Test location: 1st floor heart station

Note:

Please bring medications (including inhalers) you may need during your stay or in the hospital.

Patient name _____

Doctor _____

Test date _____

Test time _____

This time is reserved only for you, so please arrive promptly. You might want to allow time for parking and taking the elevator.

If you need to cancel this test, call _____ at 301-_____.

Your doctor wants you to stop taking the following heart medication(s) _____ day(s) before this test:

You are scheduled for a thallium scan. This test shows how well blood supplies your heart muscle after exercise and at rest. For this test, you will be given thallium through a vein of an arm. Thallium 201 is a radioactive compound that helps with scanning pictures. When thallium goes to tissues with normal blood flow, they look light when they are scanned; tissues with poor blood flow look dark. Thallium has about the same amount of radiation as a chest x-ray. Your heart will be scanned twice: once after you exercise and again after you rest for about 2 hours. A cardiologist evaluates your heart by comparing these two scans.

If you have questions about the procedure, please ask. Your nurse and doctor are ready to assist you at all times.

Preparation

1. Avoid caffeine for 24 hours before the test. This includes coffee, tea, colas, and other sodas such as Mountain Dew, as well as decaffeinated beverages and chocolate. Also avoid some over-the-counter pain relievers like Excedrin. Check labels to be sure. If you have had any caffeine on the morning of the test, please call the nurse at 301-496-3050 before you come to the hospital.
2. After midnight on the day of the test, do not eat or drink anything except water.

3. Do not take any medications on the morning of the test; please bring the medications with you.
4. Do not take Persantine (dipyridamole), Theodur, Theophylline, Albuterol, Trental, and Aggrenox.
5. Do not use nicotine products for at least 12 hours before the test.
6. If you are diabetic, do not take insulin or oral hypoglycemics the morning of your test. Please bring your insulin and other medications you will need, as well as your glucometer, to the test.
7. Wear a loose, comfortable, two-piece outfit and walking shoes (or sneakers). Avoid one-piece outfits and pantyhose. Women should wear bras (without underwire if possible).
8. The testing period will be about 5 hours, so you might want to bring something to read.

Procedure (First floor Heart Station)

1. An intravenous (I.V.) catheter will be placed in one of your arm veins.
2. You will be asked to walk on the treadmill. A nurse, PA (physician's assistant), or doctor will be present while you walk. Let them know if you have experience any symptoms while walking (such as shortness of breath, chest pain, dizziness, or fatigue). You will be asked to walk as long as you can or until one of the above symptoms limits you. The test will be stopped sooner if the nurse, PA, or the doctor have concerns.
3. After the adequate amount of exercise and target heart rate are achieved, thallium will be injected into your IV while you continue to walk. You will then need to continue walking for another minute before you stop. You will not feel the injection or have any side effects from it.
4. You will then be seated in a wheelchair and taken immediately to the Nuclear Medicine Department. There, your heart will be scanned.

5. The first scan: You will be helped to lie on a narrow table with your arms raised over your head. You will need to lie still for about 30 minutes while the camera scans your heart. After this scan, you can walk around freely for a while. You will be asked to return to the Nuclear Medicine Department in about 2 hours. (You will be given an exact time.) While you wait for the second scan, you must not eat, but you may drink water only.
6. The second scan: When you return to the Nuclear Medicine Department, you will get a second small dose of thallium followed by another scan. When the second scan is completed, your I.V. will be removed and you may return home and do your usual activities, including driving.

After the Procedure

1. Drink lots of water to help rid your body of thallium.
2. Your referring doctor or your NIH doctor will give you the results.

Special Instructions

Please let your health care team know if you are pregnant, think you might be pregnant, or if you are breastfeeding. (We do pregnancy tests routinely on all women of child-bearing potential.) Because this test uses radioactivity, this test is not usually performed on pregnant or breastfeeding women. Also, if you care for a newborn, let your health care team know so that they may give you special instructions.



1/09

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National Institutes of Health
 Clinical Center
 Bethesda, Maryland 20892