

DOBUTAMINE STRESS ECHOCARDIOGRAM TEST

What is a Dobutamine stress echocardiogram test?

An echocardiogram, also called an echo, is a test that uses ultrasound waves to produce images of the heart.

A microphone-like device, called a transducer, sends out ultrasound waves that bounce off the heart to produce images of the heart.

When combined with the administration of the medication, *Dobutamine*, the echo can detect areas of the heart that are not receiving enough blood flow.

Dobutamine stresses the heart without exercise.

Side effects may include sensation of pounding or racing heartbeat, chest pain, facial flushing, or shortness of breath.

This test is especially useful in identifying blockages in arteries that supply blood flow and oxygen to the heart.

Why has your doctor ordered your stress echocardiogram test?

Identify cause of chest pain, which can occur with blockages in blood flow to heart.

Monitor heart function in people with known heart disease.

Determine response to treatments after angioplasty or bypass surgery, or response to medications.

How do I prepare for a Dobutamine echocardiogram stress test?

Do not eat 2 hours prior to your test.

Avoid caffeine and nicotine 12 hours prior to your test.

Do not smoke or use any form of nicotine 12 hours prior to your test.

Take your medications on the day of the test unless instructed otherwise.

Do not apply lotions or powders to the chest.

Wear loose, comfortable clothing.

What happens during the stress test?

You will be given an explanation of the test and asked to sign a consent form.

A nurse inserts an intravenous catheter into your hand or arm.

Electrodes are placed on your chest and connected by wires to the ECG machine.

While you lie on an exam table, an echo technician moves a transducer over your chest to obtain images of your heart.

A nurse supervises the stress portion of the test as the *Dobutamine* is administered.

Your blood pressure is checked frequently, and your ECG is continually monitored.

Echo images are obtained during and immediately after the infusion of *Dobutamine*.

Report any symptoms, such as chest pain, shortness of breath, or dizziness.

Your blood pressure and ECG will be monitored for several minutes after the test.

When will I know the results of the stress test?

Final interpretation of the test results is completed by a cardiologist.

The physician ordering your test and family doctor will receive a report within 3 days.