

Dobutamine Stress Echocardiogram



Interior Health
Every person matters

Patient Information

www.interiorhealth.ca

What is a Dobutamine Stress Echocardiogram?

A Dobutamine Stress Echocardiogram is a heart test that checks how well your heart is working. This test uses medication called dobutamine instead of exercise. The medication makes your heart muscle act as if you are exercising.

An echocardiogram uses sound waves (ultrasound) to produce images of your heart. The images tell us how well your heart is pumping. We use this test to:

- Determine how well your heart muscle and valves are working
- Determine if you have coronary artery disease
- Evaluate how well your cardiac care plan is working

How do I prepare the test?

- Do not use any products that contain nicotine or tobacco, such as cigarettes or e-cigarettes on the day of the test.
- Do not eat or drink for several hours before the test.
- Avoid all forms of caffeine for 24 hours before the test.

Should I take my medications before the test?

- Take your medication(s) as directed with sips of water unless instructed otherwise.
- If you wear a nitroglycerin patch, ask your health care provider if the patch should be taken off before the test.
- If you use an inhaler for a breathing condition, bring it with you to the test.

more information on other side →

Healthlink BC	Nurse	24 hours a day	Daily	<i>Call 8-1-1 to speak with a nurse, ask a dietitian about nutrition, or a pharmacist about your medication.</i>
Call 8-1-1	Dietitian	9 am–5 pm	Mon–Fri	
	Pharmacist	5 pm–9 am	Daily	
www.healthlinkbc.ca	Hearing Impaired	Call 7-1-1		

Dobutamine Stress Echocardiogram (*continued*)

What happens during the test?

- A cardiology technologist will place electrodes on your chest. The electrodes are attached to a monitor to record the electrical activity of your heart. This is called an electrocardiogram (ECG).
- A nurse will insert an intravenous (IV) into a vein in your arm. The IV is used to give you dobutamine during the test.
- A blood pressure cuff will be placed on your arm or leg. Your blood pressure will be taken and recorded throughout the test.
- A cardiac sonographer will take ultrasound images of your heart. The sonographer will place a wand (called a transducer) on your chest and images will be taken periodically throughout the test.
- The medication will make your heart react as if you are exercising and your heart will beat faster.
- The nurse will ask you how you are feeling throughout the test. Please tell the team if you feel chest, arm or jaw pain or discomfort, as well as shortness of breath, dizziness or light-headedness.
- Once the test is finished, the IV will be removed from your arm. Your heart rate will return to normal within 5 to 10 minutes of stopping the dobutamine.

How long will the procedure take?

- The test will take approximately one hour. You may be asked to stay in the department for another 30 minutes after the test. You must stay in the department until all of your symptoms are gone.

What are the risks and complications of this test?

Generally, this is a safe procedure. However, as with any procedure, complications can occur.

Possible complications during the test include:

- Dizziness or light-headedness
- Shortness of breath
- Increased or irregular heartbeat
- Nausea or vomiting
- Chest, jaw or neck pain
- Reactions to the medication. These may include flushing, headache or changes in blood pressure.

What to expect after the test?

- We will monitor your heart rate and blood pressure after the test.
- Once your heart rate and blood pressure return to normal, you can resume your usual activities. This includes food, activity and medications.