

Exercise stress test

What is a cardiopulmonary exercise stress test?

This is a test to see how your child's heart and lungs respond to exercise. Your child will either run on a treadmill or pedal on a bicycle until he can no longer keep doing it.

- You can expect to be in the stress lab for about 1 to 1.5 (one and a half) hours.
 - If your child needs an echo with the exercise, this will add about 1 hour to the visit.
- Most often, the exercise part of the test lasts less than 20 minutes.
- Please arrive 30 minutes before your scheduled time. This is to give you time to park, register and check in with Security.

How do I schedule the test and where is the test performed?

- The schedulers from Children's Healthcare of Atlanta will call you within a week to schedule the test for your child.
- To contact the schedulers, please call 404-785-6476.
- The test is performed in the stress lab at:
 - Children's Healthcare of Atlanta at Egleston
1405 Clifton Road Northeast
Atlanta, Georgia 30322

How do I prepare my child for the test?

Your child should:

- Eat his normal meals.
 - Your child should NOT skip breakfast. This may affect his ability to do the test.
 - Your child should not have a large meal within 2 hours before the test.
- Drink fluids up to the test time. Your child should NOT have caffeine (such as soda, tea, coffee or chocolate).
- Wear or bring comfortable clothes for exercise (such as a t-shirt, shorts or sweat pants). Girls may wear a sports bra under their shirt.
- Wear or bring running or athletic shoes. Your child should not wear sandals, loafers or slip-ons.
- Take all regular heart medicines as scheduled. Call 404-785-6476 before you give your child any asthma medicines.
- **Only 1 parent or guardian is allowed to stay with your child in the stress lab. This is for safety reasons.**

This handout contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

What happens before the test?

The Cardiology technologist (tech) will prepare your child for the test. The tech will:

- Place electrodes on your child's chest and attach them to clips. This is so that the machine can monitor your child's heart rate and rhythm.
 - There is no pain.
 - There is no chance for electric shock.
- Place a blood pressure cuff on your child's arm.
- Place a monitor on your child's finger. This is to measure oxygen levels.

Your child may need:

- Breathing tests before and after exercise.
- A mask placed over his nose and mouth. This is to measure his breathing before, during and after the test.
- Echo images taken before, during and/or after the exercise.

What happens during the test?

- Your child will walk on the treadmill or ride the bicycle.
 - The incline, resistance and speed will increase. This is to quickly raise your child's heart rate.
 - Your child will be closely monitored and encouraged to keep going as long as he can.
- When your child says that he cannot keep going, the test will stop. Your child will continue to walk or cycle at a regular pace for several minutes to cool down.
 - We will continue to gather data during this phase.
 - Once your child's heart rate returns to normal, the tech will remove the monitors from your child.
- A doctor will review the test results after the test is complete. A cardiologist (heart doctor) will go over the complete report and send it to your child's doctor.
 - Please contact your child's doctor who ordered the test for results

What is the late policy?

This test involves a stress lab, Cardiology tech and a doctor. If you are running late on the day of the test, please call the stress lab office at 404-785-6476. Ask to see if there are other test times or if you need to reschedule.

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