

# Cardiopulmonary Exercise Stress Test

*Information for Patients and Families*



## What is a cardiopulmonary stress test?

This test involves having your child either run on a treadmill or pedal on an exercise bicycle until they can't continue. During this process, we will gather information that will help your doctor see how your child's heart and lungs respond to exercise. You can expect to be in the lab for about 1-1.5 hours, but the actual exercise portion of the test generally lasts less than 20 minutes. Please to arrive 30 minutes earlier than scheduled to allow time for parking, registration and security.

## Prior to Testing

- ✓ Eat meals as usual, but do not have a large meal within 2 hours prior to the test. **DO NOT** skip breakfast as this may affect your ability to complete the test. Also, please drink fluids up to the test time, but **NO** caffeine [Coke, tea, coffee, chocolate].
- ✓ Wear or bring comfortable clothes for exercise (T-shirt, shorts, sweat pants; girls may wear a sports bra under their shirt).
- ✓ Wear or bring running or athletic shoes. No sandals, loafers or slip-ons, please.
- ✓ Take all regular heart medications as scheduled / Call before administering asthma medications.

## Procedure Preparation

The Exercise Technologist will prepare your child for the test. This involves:

- Placing electrodes on your child's chest, then attaching clips to these so that the machine can monitor his/her heartrate and rhythm. There is **NO** pain involved with this and no chance for electric shock.
- Placing a blood pressure cuff on your child's arm.
- Placing a monitor on his/her finger to measure oxygen levels.
- Your child might have breathing tests before and after exercise.
- Your child might have a mask placed over the nose and mouth to measure his/her breathing before, during and after the test.

## Testing

Your child will walk on the treadmill or ride the cycle. The incline/resistance and speed will increase every minute in order to quickly raise the heart rate. The length of time your child will exercise depends on how well his/her heart and lungs perform during the test. Your child will be closely monitored and encouraged to keep going as long as he/she can. Once your child indicates that he/she can continue no longer, the test will stop.

After the test, your child will continue to walk/cycle at a regular pace for several minutes to cool down. We will continue to gather data during this phase. Once the heart rate has returned to normal, your child will be disconnected from all the monitors.

A physician will review the test results after the test is complete. A complete interpretation and recommendations by the cardiologist will be dictated and forwarded to your referring physician.

## Late Policy

This test involves a laboratory, cardiology technologists, and a physician. If you are running late on the day of testing, call the stress lab office at 404-785-6476 to see if there are other available appointment times or if you need to be rescheduled.

**ALWAYS CONSULT YOUR DOCTOR OR OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDER IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS REGARDING THE CARE OR HEALTH OF YOUR CHILD.**

Prepared by the staff of Sibley Heart Center Cardiology

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