

DANBURY HOSPITAL

Patient Education Handout

What is a Dobutamine Cardiolute Stress Test?

Why is a Dobutamine Cardiolute stress test ordered?

A Dobutamine stress test is performed to evaluate the blood supply and function of the heart. It is useful in detecting how adequate the blood supply is to the heart muscle. Dobutamine is a drug that increases your heart rate and the force of the contraction of your heart. This test has been ordered for you if you are unable to walk on a treadmill. Your doctor may also order this test for you if you have asthma.

Plan to be at the testing area for about three (3) hours.

Is there any special preparation for this test?

Do not eat or smoke for at least three hours before your test. Drinking *only* water before the test is permitted. Take all of your regular medications before the test unless directed otherwise by your doctor.

It is recommended that medications known as beta-blockers not be taken prior to performing this test. Be sure to check with your doctor first before holding any of your medications. If you are a diabetic test your blood sugar before you arrive to the testing area. If you are a diabetic you should have a light meal three hours before the test, as exercise will tend to lower your blood sugar. You are encouraged to bring your blood sugar meter with you. Bring a current list of all your medications with you for the nurse to review.

What can I expect on the day of the test?

- After you have arrived and registered for your test, a brief medical history will be conducted, including the medications you are presently taking.
- Then an intravenous (IV) will be inserted into your hand or arm and a Nuclear Technologist

will inject a nuclear isotope called Cardiolute into the IV.

This isotope is a "tracer" or agent that helps the cardiology staff to see the heart with a special nuclear camera. Side effects from Cardiolute are very rare. Some people may experience a metallic taste initially when the isotope is given, but this goes away quickly.

- You will then have about a 45 minute wait before your first set of pictures of your heart; these are known as, "Resting Pictures". A Nuclear Cardiology Technician will escort you from the waiting room to the camera for these pictures. You will lie under the camera for about 15 minutes with your arms above your head, and remain motionless. If you are unable to perform this task, make the technologist aware so accommodations may be made.
- Following the resting pictures, you will be escorted to the stress testing room. A Registered Nurse will place 10 sticky tabs on your chest for the electrocardiogram, and place the blood pressure cuff to your arm. The Registered Nurse will connect into the IV through which to administer the Dobutamine. A Cardiologist will be present to administer and supervise the test.

The amount of Dobutamine is determined by your weight; therefore it is important that you provide as accurate a weight as possible to the nurse.

Side effects from Dobutamine include, increased heart rate sensation, increased blood pressure, head ache, nausea and anxiety. It is important to know that not everyone experiences these side effects, and those that do, report that the side effects abate quickly once the infusion is complete.

- Once started, the rate of the Dobutamine will be increased every three minutes based on

your response to the medication. In some instances patients may not have the desired increase of their heart rate with the Dobutamine alone. In those situations, the decision may be made to add an additional medication known as Atropine.

Atropine is a medication that will rapidly increase your heart rate; the effects of Atropine are brief. Side effects from atropine include the sensation of a rapidly increased heart rate, anxiety, and possible head ache.

Patients with glaucoma cannot receive Atropine; make sure that the nurse and cardiologist are aware if you have a diagnosis of glaucoma. The decision to give Atropine is determined by the Cardiologist.

- Once the desired heart rate response is achieved the second dose of the Cardiolite will be given.
- The Dobutamine will be stopped and your vital signs will be monitored for the next ten minutes, or until your heart rate and blood pressure return to pretest levels.
- The electrocardiogram, blood pressure cuff, and the IV will be removed and a small bandage will be placed over the area. Three of the sticky tabs will be left on your chest for the final pictures of your heart; these are known as, "Stress Pictures".
- At this time you may eat and drink normally, there are no restrictions.
- About 30 minutes later you will have your stress pictures; these pictures reflect your heart's function during exercise. The Cardiologist will compare the Resting Pictures to the Stress Pictures. This time under the camera is of less duration but still requires hands above the head and remaining motionless.
- After the stress pictures the test will be complete.

How will I get the results of the test?

The test will be interpreted by a cardiologist, who will then send the results to the doctor who ordered the test for you. These results are normally available within five working days. A technologist or nurse cannot discuss results of the test.

What happens when the test is finished?

When you have had your second set of pictures the nuclear technologist will remove the last three sticky tabs from your chest. At that time your test is completed and you may leave with no restrictions. It is important that the bandage be removed within several hours of the test and you inspect the area. If there is any redness or tenderness it is important to phone the number listed below and speak with the nurse.

Directions to your appointment

During construction you will park in the Purple Lot. Registration for this test will be on the 5th floor Main Lobby.

Dobutamine Cardiolite Stress Test is performed only at Danbury Hospital

Danbury Hospital- Follow directions to the BLUE parking lot and park in the Purple Section. Enter the main lobby on the fifth floor; at the information desk ask for directions to Stress Testing.

If you have further questions or concerns please call (203) 739-7377. 8am-4pm

Source: Danbury Hospital Praxair Regional Heart and Vascular Center.