

MYOCARDIAL PERFUSION SCAN
WHAT TO EXPECT

Your cardiologist has requested that you have a myocardial perfusion scan to evaluate the blood supply to your heart muscle. By injecting very small amounts of a radioisotope through an IV in the arm or hand, we are able to determine whether areas of your heart muscle are receiving adequate blood supply. This is a noninvasive way to help your cardiologist determine the best course of treatment for you.

The level of radiation you will be exposed to is similar to that of a chest CT scan, but no “dye” is used for this test. Patients who are unable to exercise on a treadmill will receive a medication called Adenosine or Regadenoson through an intravenous line. This may cause some temporary flushing, headache, shortness of breath, or chest discomfort.

You will have three images taken; (a) The first will look at your heart during a “resting” state. (b) The second picture will look at your heart after “stress.” These two pictures will take 16 to 19 minutes each. The pictures will require you to lie on your back with your left arm raised above your head, supported by an arm rest. The third image will take 5 minutes and will be performed with you lying prone on your stomach. The camera will rotate 180° around your chest. Though the camera is close to you, even individuals who experience claustrophobia are almost always able to complete this test. You will not be placed in a “tube” and the camera is “open.” We will make sure you are as comfortable as possible, as it is necessary to stay motionless during the imaging.

If your questions have not been answered in this summary, please discuss them with the technologist on the day of your exam.