

Hemet Heart Medical Center Patient Education

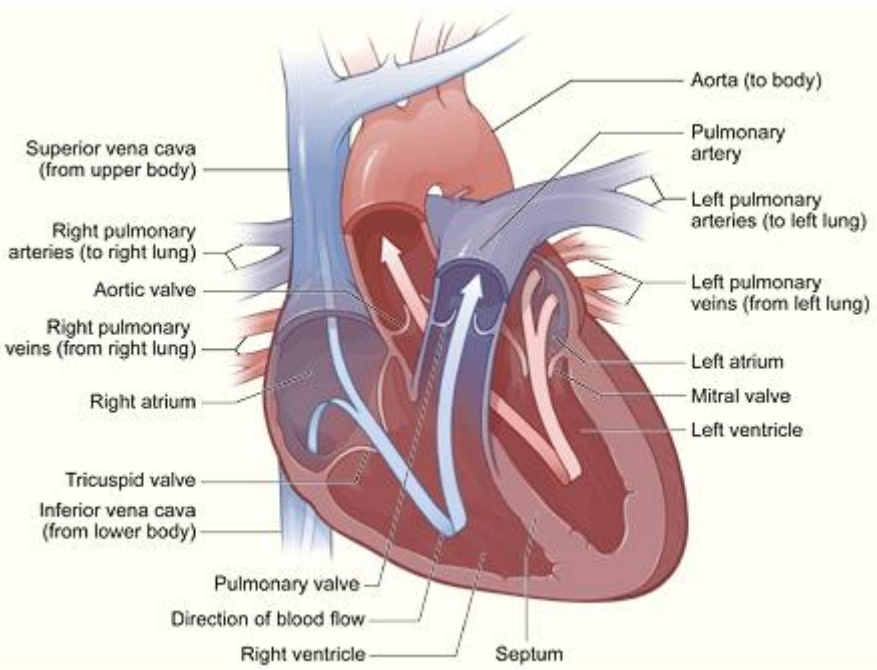


Image: National Heart Lung and Blood Institute

Basic Facts

Stress testing is a painless, safe method to measure how well the heart responds to an increase in the body's demand for oxygen. During a stress test, your heart is monitored using images or through dime-sized electrodes attached to your chest, arms, or legs.

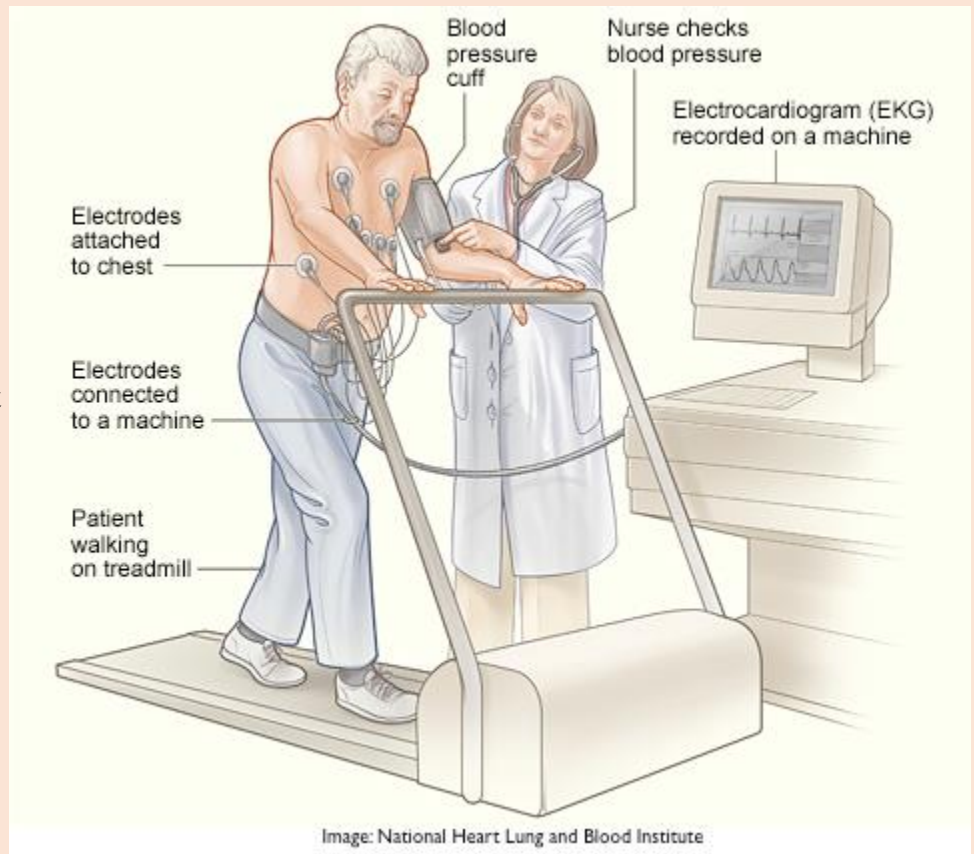
A stress test helps show whether enough blood flows to your heart when it's working hard. Doctors usually use stress testing to help them diagnose coronary artery disease (CAD) or to see how serious this disease is in those who are known to have it.

You may need a stress test if you have CAD symptoms, such as chest pain and shortness of breath. If you've been diagnosed with CAD or recently had a heart attack, you may have stress testing to see whether treatments aimed at improving blood flow in the heart's arteries are needed and likely to help you. Stress testing also is done on people who have signs of an arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat).

The person taking the test may choose to stop the ECG stress test at any time and you're able to return to all your normal activities after a stress test.

An electrocardiogram (EKG) stress test monitors a person's heartbeat at rest and during exercise, most commonly while a person walks on a treadmill. During the test someone will always be with you to closely monitor your health status. Before you start the "stress" part of the stress test small sticky patches called electrodes are placed on the skin of your chest, arms, and legs.

The electrodes are connected to a machine that records the electrical activity of your heart. This recording is called an EKG and shows the pace and rhythm of your heart beat.



The recordings of EKG stress test can show subtle changes in heart electrical activity that can help a physician:

- Determine physical fitness;
- Locate areas of the heart that receive an insufficient blood and oxygen supply;
- Reveal heart rhythm abnormalities;
- Evaluate a person's prognosis after a heart attack;
- Verify the effectiveness of medical and surgical therapies; and
- Determine an appropriate exercise program for people with known heart disease.

For more Information..

visit the [National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute](#)

visit the [American Heart Association](#)