



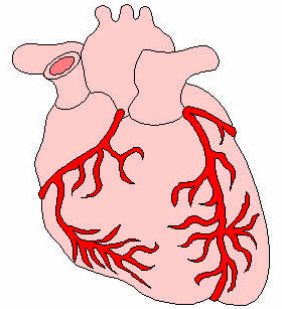
# **NUCLEAR STRESS TEST Information**

**MIDDLESEX CARDIOLOGY ASSOCIATES, P.C.**

## **NUCLEAR STRESS TEST**

### **WHAT IS IT?**

**A Nuclear Stress Test is an exam that demonstrates the coronary artery blood flow to the heart.** This test is performed to see if the heart muscle is receiving the blood supply it needs by comparing stress images to rest images. An injection of radionuclide called Cardiolute/Sestamibi, allows the heart to be imaged while the patient lies under a gamma camera. The radionuclide will decay on its own. The radiation received is about as much as two chest x-rays. **This is a two day, two part test.**



A “resting portion”: A gamma camera takes images of the patient’s heart while at rest.

A “stress portion”: A second set of images are taken following exercise.

When both sets of images are completed, a Cardiologist will interpret them. The physician that ordered the test will receive a report on the findings of the study. If no scheduled appointment has been arranged to see the physician, and the patient has not heard from the doctor’s office, please call the office for your test results.

### **RESTING PORTION OF THE TEST:**

#### ***BEFORE THE TEST:***

- **No food 4-6 hours prior to your appointment time... Water only to drink**
- **If diabetic, please notify the technician prior to testing.**
- **If pregnant, or suspect you may be pregnant, or are a nursing mother please notify the technician prior to testing**
- **The nuclear technician will call to confirm the appointment and review any instructions a day or two before the test.**



#### ***DURING THE TEST:***

A small amount of radionuclide will be injected into a vein in the patient’s arm. There is a one hour wait to allow the radionuclide to circulate, then images will be taken with the patient lying under a gamma camera. This will take approximately 10-20 minutes. **Allow 1½ hours for the entire resting portion of the test.**



## STRESS PORTION OF THE TEST:

### *BEFORE THE TEST:*

- **No food 4-6 hours prior to your appointment time... Water only to drink**
- **No caffeine 24 hours before the stress test. Caffeine will interfere with the test. This includes coffee, tea, chocolate, soda and decaf beverages.**
- **Please wear comfortable clothing and shoes suitable for walking on the treadmill**
- **If diabetic, please notify the technician prior to testing.**
- **If pregnant, or suspect you may be pregnant, or are a nursing mother please notify the technician prior to testing**
- **If you are diabetic, please notify the technician prior to testing**
- **If you are taking any heart medications, please notify the technician prior to testing.**



### *DURING THE TEST:*

Your heart will be monitored with an electrocardiogram. This assesses the electrical function of the heart before and during exercise. The blood pressure will be monitored. An intravenous line will be started in the patient's arm. The purpose of the IV is for the injection of the radionuclide at peak exercise. The goal of exercise is to reach between 85% and 100% target heart rate for the patient's age. If the patient is unable to exercise, please inform the technologist before the test starts. (see chemical stress test below)



Following the stress test, there is a recovery period. The blood pressure and heart rate will be monitored for approximately 5 minutes. Once the patient is back to their resting heart rate and blood pressure, the IV and electrodes will be removed. There is about a 15-30 minute wait until the images are taken. The imaging will then take approximately an additional 15-30 minutes. **Allow 1½ to 2 hours for the entire stress test and imaging.**

### CHEMICAL STRESS TESTING:

If the patient is unable to exercise on the treadmill, a medicine called IV Persantine (Dipyridamole) will be used. This medicine dilates the vessels and simulates exercise. The medicine is injected through the IV line already in the patient's arm. Limited exercise is recommended if possible. A chemical stress test is used primarily if the patient cannot reach their target heart rate or exercise on a treadmill. The same instructions should be followed as indicated in the stress test.



## **ABOUT OUR LABS**

Middlesex Cardiology Nuclear Labs have been accredited with The ICANL (The Intersocietal Commission for the Accreditation of Nuclear Medicine Laboratories) for Myocardial Perfusion and Equilibrium Radionuclide Angiography since 1998.

**Please call if you have any questions:**

**Middletown Nuclear Lab: 860-347-4258**  
**Old Saybrook Nuclear Lab: 860-388-3564**  
**Marlborough Nuclear Lab: 860-295-9920**

**This handout is not a substitute for the professional advice of a physician. Please consult your physician for more information on this procedure.**