

APPOINTMENT DATE: _____ **TIME:** _____

WHAT IS A STRESS ECHOCARDIOGRAM?

An echocardiogram (echo) is a test that uses sound waves to create a live, moving picture of the heart. The test is performed three times: before exercise, immediately following exercise, and five minutes after exercise (when the heart rate has returned to normal). This way the doctor can see both how the heart functions when it is at rest and when it is working hard.

WHY AM I HAVING THIS TEST?

Certain types of heart problems, particularly those involving the coronary arteries that feed the heart muscle, occur only during exercise. This test detects those types of problems.

HOW IS THE TEST PERFORMED?

- Dr. Richard Kirkpatrick and his echo technician will perform this test.
- You will be asked to remove clothing above the waist and put on a gown.
- EKG electrodes will be placed on your chest to record the heart's electrical activity. EKG and blood pressure readings will be monitored throughout the test.
- A resting echo will be performed. You will be asked to lie on your left side on the exam table. The technician will spread gel on your chest and press a transducer (which looks like a little microphone) firmly on the gelled area. The transducer sends sound waves through your chest and then picks up the return sound waves, or "echoes." These echoes are transmitted into the echocardiogram machine and get converted into a moving picture of the heart.
 - After the resting echo is performed, you will exercise to raise your heart rate by walking on a treadmill or riding a stationary bike. Per national protocols, the exercise rate will be increased slowly until you need to stop.
 - When you cannot exercise any longer, you will get off the exercise equipment and quickly return to the exam table so that the technician can perform a second echocardiogram while your heart is still working hard.
- Five minutes later, a third set of pictures is collected.
- Your heart rate, blood pressure, and EKG will be checked throughout the test.
- Once the test is complete, you will change into your street clothes and Dr. Kirkpatrick will show and discuss the results with you (and your family member, if you wish).



HOW LONG DOES THE TEST TAKE?

- This test will take approximately 45 minutes.
- Actual exercise time is usually only 7-12 minutes.

HOW DO I PREPARE FOR THIS TEST?

- Do not eat or drink anything besides water for two (2) hours before your test.
- Do not consume any product containing caffeine for 24 hours before your test. (Caffeine may interfere with the results). Common products that contain caffeine include soda, coffee, tea, chocolate, No Doz, Excedrin and Anacin.
- Do not smoke or use nicotine products for four (4) hours before the test.
- If you are taking medications, it is up to your doctor to decide whether you should stop any of them prior to your test. If you are taking heart medications, DO take them on the day of the test. If you are a diabetic on insulin or oral hypoglycemic medications, please contact your doctor for special instructions.



- Wear comfortable, exercise clothing on the day of your test.
- Wear a comfortable pair of walking or jogging shoes.
- Do not apply any cream, lotion, or powder to your chest area on the day of your test because it interferes with the monitor hook-up.

WHERE DO I GO TO TAKE THIS TEST?

This test will be performed at Kirkpatrick Family Care's satellite office at **783 Commerce, Suite 300, Longview, WA 98632.**

ARE THERE ANY RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS TEST?

There are no known risks from ultrasound waves. The exercise portion of the test is also safe – the rate of serious complications is about one in 10,000 and Dr. Kirkpatrick personally monitors you while you are on the treadmill or bike. Our office has performed approximately 8,000 stress tests without a serious problem.

WHEN WILL I KNOW THE RESULTS OF THE PROCEDURE?

Dr. Kirkpatrick will show you the pictures and discuss the results with you before you go home.

WHO DO I CALL IF I HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT THE TEST?

Call Kirkpatrick Family Care at (360) 423-9580 – the receptionist will direct your call to the most qualified person able to address your question or concern.