



GRADED EXERCISE STRESS TEST (GXT)

What it is

A GXT is test that allows your cardiologist to test your heart's response to exercise.

What is the purpose of a GXT?

A GXT can be performed to many reasons including:

- Assessing the cause of chest pain or shortness of breath.
- Assessing your exercise capacity.
- Assessing your risk of developing abnormal heart rhythms with exercise.
- Assessing your eligibility to participate in exercise programs.
- Assessing your heart rate and blood pressure response to exercise.
- **A GXT is a very safe test.** You will be monitored continuously during the test. The risk is similar to if you were to exercise vigorously outside of our clinic. The average risk is 1 in 10,000 of serious complications. This means that 9,999 of 10000 tests are complete without complications.

Performance/Preparation

How is a GXT performed?

- You will be walking on a treadmill that will gradually get faster and steeper.
- Your blood pressure, heart rate, and electrocardiogram (ECG) will be assessed prior to exercise, during the various stages of exercise, and after the completion of exercise.
- You will be asked to exercise until you are fatigued to the point where you can no longer continue walking on the treadmill.
- The test will be stopped if you feel that you can no longer increase the speed or grade any further. The supervising physician or technologist may decide to stop the test if they feel that you can not exercise any longer, you develop chest pain, or they see changes in the test that they feel has provided enough information.
- Please wear comfortable clothing and shoes that you will be able to exercise in.
- Do not eat or drink for a minimum of 3 hours prior to the stress test. This reduces the risk of nausea and vomiting with exercise.

Duration

In total you will need to allow approximately 1 hour for the entire test. This includes the preparation, the actual stress test, and the period after exercise.

Medications

Your physicians may ask you to hold some of your medications prior to the test. Common medications that are held include beta-blockers (metoprolol, bisoprolol, carvediolol, atenolol) and calcium channel blockers (diltiazem, verapamil).

- Please bring all of your medications to the test with you.
- Do not wear body oils, lotions, perfumes or cologne to the test.

Driving

There are no risks to driving after the test (both private and commercial)