



## About Dobutamine Stress Echocardiography

A dobutamine stress echocardiogram (stress echo) is a test used to assess your heart's function while it is under stress. It is usually for patients who are unable to exercise or walk on a treadmill. Your stress echo will include ultrasound images and an electrocardiogram (ECG).

## Preparing for a Dobutamine Stress Echo

1. Wear loose fitting comfortable clothing. Shorts or pants would be best, rather than a dress.
2. Do not eat a big meal before your test (within 2 hours).
3. Do not drink caffeinated drinks such as tea or coffee for 12 hours before the test. It is okay to drink water.
4. If you use inhalers (puffers), bring them with you to the test.
5. You should not take any of the following medications on the day of the test, unless told to by your doctor.
  - Beta blockers (metoprolol, atenolol, sotalol, bisoprolol)
  - Calcium channel blockers (diltiazem, verapamil, amlodipine, lercanidipine)

If you are taking these medicines, or aren't sure, please tell us before your appointment.

6. Bring a list of your medications with you.
7. It is better if you have someone to drive you home after the test.

## What to expect

There are two parts to the test.

### Part 1: Resting images

First, we will perform an echocardiogram using an ultrasound machine. This checks how your heart functions when you are resting. An ECG will also be connected to monitor your heart rhythm. You will lie on your left side while the pictures are taken, and this part will take about ten minutes.

### Part 2: Stress

Next, your heart is 'stressed'. You will lie on the bed on your back or left side. A medicine called dobutamine is slowly injected into your blood stream, to briefly increase your heart rate. Once your heart is working hard, more echocardiogram pictures are taken. Finally, we compare these with the resting images taken in part 1, to see if there have been any changes. Your pulse rate will go back to normal usually within 10-15 minutes, after the injection is stopped. The test will be stopped if you have chest pain, become very tired or very short of breath (puffed).



## Results

After your test, we will write a report and send it to your referring doctor. You should be able to talk with your doctor about your results and discuss your next steps.

If we notice anything that needs urgent attention, we will tell you at the time of the test.

## Important information

If you have any questions about this test, you can call the Cardiology Department.

Office hours: 8:30am – 5:00pm – Monday to Friday, Phone: (02) 5124 2371

If your call isn't answered, please leave a message with your contact details, and ask for someone to call you back.

This test is bulk billed so you will not have to pay anything. Please bring your Medicare card (or DVA card if you have one). There is a waiting list for this test, so please let us know as soon as possible if you cannot keep your appointment, or if you've had the test already somewhere else.

On the day of your dobutamine stress echo, please leave plenty of time for parking, and the test usually takes an hour to complete.

## Location:

Canberra Hospital, Yamba Drive, Garran ACT 2605

Cardiology Outpatients, Building 1, Level 3

### Acknowledgement of Country



Canberra Health Services acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Ngunnawal people. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and contribution to the life of this city and region.



© Australian Capital Territory, Canberra June 2022



Accessibility

Call (02) 5124 0000



Call 131 450

[canberrahealthservices.act.gov.au/accessibility](https://canberrahealthservices.act.gov.au/accessibility)