

Dear Patient:

Your test is scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM, at New West Physicians Cardiology Services Phone: 303-274-3311

## **INFORMATION FOR YOUR STRESS ECHOCARDIOGRAM**

### **WHAT IS A TREADMILL STRESS ECHOCARDIOGRAM?**

The treadmill stress echocardiogram, or echo, involves exercising on a treadmill while you are closely monitored. Echocardiographic images (ultrasound) are taken of the heart before and immediately after you exercise. A microphone-like device called a transducer is placed on your chest and sends out ultrasound waves that bounce off the heart to produce images of the heart. This stress test is used to determine how well your heart tolerates activity, evaluate the function of your heart and valves, determine your likelihood of having coronary artery disease (blocked arteries), and evaluate the effectiveness of your cardiac treatment plan. This test takes approximately 1½ hours. This includes the preparation, exercise portion and recovery period for the test. The approximate time you will be on the treadmill is five to 15 minutes, depending on the individual.

### **PREPARING FOR YOUR TREADMILL STRESS ECHOCARDIOGRAM**

- You can eat a light meal before your test.
- If you use an inhaler for breathing, bring it to the test.
- Wear loose, comfortable clothes and shoes for walking.
- Please bring a list of your current medications.
- Take all your medications as prescribed unless directed otherwise by the cardiology office.
- Do not apply lotions or powders to the chest

## **WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE TREADMILL STRESS ECHOCARDIOGRAM?**

- Before the procedure, you will be given an explanation of the test and then asked to sign a consent form.
- Electrodes will be placed on your chest and connected by wires to the EKG machine, which allows for continuous monitoring of your heart rhythm.
- Resting echocardiographic images will be taken with you lying on your left side.
- An MD, sonographer and a NICT tech will supervise your test.
- You will be shown how to use the treadmill.
- The treadmill will start out slowly at first and gradually increase in speed and incline. Every three minutes, the speed and incline will go up.
- Your blood pressure will be checked frequently and your EKG is continuously monitored.
- During the test, if you experience any chest pain, shortness of breath or dizziness, let the MD or technician know.
- When you reach the point at which you feel that you can't exercise any longer, the treadmill is stopped abruptly, and you will return to the exam table quickly for post-examine ultrasound pictures.
- You will lie on your left side for these pictures.
- After the test is completed, your blood pressure and EKG will be checked until your readings have returned to baseline.

## **WHEN WILL I KNOW THE RESULTS OF MY TREADMILL STRESS ECHOCARDIOGRAM?**

The cardiologist will review the results of the treadmill with you and will inform your primary care physician. Please call us with any further questions or concerns.