



NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S
When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.

Helping Hand™

Health Education for Patients and Families

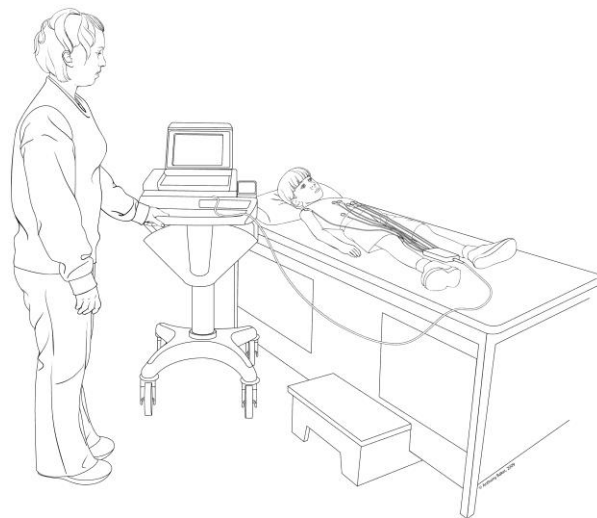
Exercise Stress Test

An exercise stress test helps your doctor or health care provider see how well your body works while you're active. It measures the function of your heart, lungs, and muscles during physical activity. You'll start by walking on a treadmill or riding a bicycle until you feel like you can't keep exercising.

Step 1: Electrocardiogram (ECG)

An ECG records your heart rate and rhythm during the exercise test.

1. A technician will record your height and weight.
2. They will clean your chest in a few areas with an alcohol pad.
3. Small stickers called electrodes will be placed on your chest (Picture 1). They don't hurt, but they could make your skin red. The redness will go away a few hours after testing. Wires are then attached to each sticker. The wires are connected to a box on a belt that will go around your waist.
4. The technician will ask you to lie still for a minute or two so they can print out a paper that shows your heart rate and rhythm.



Picture 1 Electrodes are sticky on one side. This helps them stay on your skin and not fall off during the test.

Step 2: Oxygen Saturation

Oxygen saturation is the amount of oxygen in the blood at a given time.

A small sticker will be attached to your pointer (index) finger before you start exercising. This sticker has a special red light that detects how much oxygen is in your body.

Step 3: Pulmonary Function Tests (PFTs)

PFTs are breathing tests that check how well your lungs are working by measuring how much air goes in and out of them.

You may need to do a breathing test depending on why you're doing the exercise test.

1. The test is done before **and** after exercise to see how your lungs work before and after you have been active.
2. A clip will be placed on your nose so that you can only breathe through your mouth. You will blow through a special mouthpiece connected to a computer.

Step 4: Blood Pressure

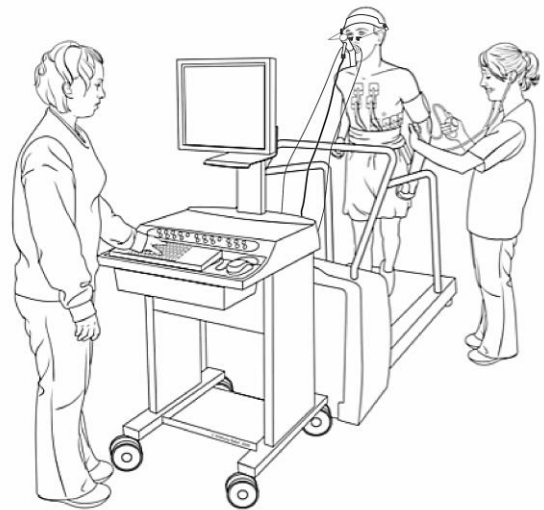
A blood pressure measurement is a test that measures the force of blood as it travels through your body.

1. Your blood pressure will be checked before, during, and after the exercise test.
2. The blood pressure cuff will go around the upper part of your arm.
3. The cuff will get tight around your arm and then slowly loosen. For some, blood pressure may also be taken on the leg.

Step 5: Exercise Stress Test

During this test, you will:

1. Exercise on a bicycle or treadmill (Picture 2).
2. Wear a special mouthpiece to measure your breath when you breathe in (inhale) and breathe out (exhale).
3. The mouthpiece is connected to a special computer that records these breaths.
4. As you exercise, the treadmill will get steeper and faster, or the bicycle will become harder and harder to peddle. You'll be asked to keep exercising until you can no longer do so.



Picture 2 Using the treadmill.

Step 6: After the Test

1. You'll be asked the reason(s) that you needed to stop the test.
2. The ECG lead wires will stay attached for about 10 to 15 minutes so the technician can continue to watch your heart rate return to normal.
3. If you did a breathing test before the test, you will do another one.