

Common Cardiology Imaging & Diagnostic Tests

- **Echocardiograms (ultrasound of the heart)** - help us view and understand your heart structure, including heart and valve function and disease. Often used to test the strength of the heart.
- **EKG (electrocardiograms)** - help us determine heart rhythm and are used as a screening tool for coronary artery disease and abnormal heart rhythms.
- **Exercise treadmill** - provide a continuous EKG recording of your heart as you perform increasing levels of exercise. This is used to screen for abnormal heart rhythms and narrowed arteries of the heart.
- **Stress imaging tests** - add additional test components to a treadmill test using either stress echo or nuclear cardiology (see below). Occasionally, a drug that stimulates exercise is used instead of the actual physical activity.
- **Stress echocardiogram** - uses ultrasound to take pictures of the heart's response to exercise or simulated exercise. This helps to detect coronary artery narrowing.
- **Nuclear cardiology** - is another method of testing for blocked arteries. These tests typically involve using a small amount of radioactive substance (dye) injected into a vein in your arm. The dye gets to your heart and then to the arteries of your heart. Images are taken to see if you are receiving an adequate blood supply to these vessels.
- **CT Angiography/Cardiac CT and calcium scoring** - these tests typically use a very sophisticated CT scanner and a computer to get clearly detailed images of your heart's arteries. The images can show if fatty deposits (or calcium and plaque) are blocking or narrowing your arteries. The procedure uses a contrast dye through an IV line in your arm. The dye helps us view your arteries more clearly.
- **Cardiac MRI** - complements an echocardiogram by giving a very detailed look at the structure and function of the heart. Often used to gain additional information based on the echocardiogram.