

Cardiac investigations department – Charing Cross Hospital  
& Hammersmith Hospital

Waller cardiovascular unit – St Mary's Hospital

# Exercise tolerance test

## Information for patients, parents and carers

### Introduction

You have been given or sent this leaflet because you are booked in for an exercise test. This leaflet explains what will happen at your appointment. Please contact your care team if you have any questions or concerns.

### What is an exercise tolerance test?

Exercise treadmill testing (also known as exercise tolerance testing) is a non-invasive procedure where physically-able patients walk / jog on a medical treadmill. This test provides information about the patient's ability to exercise at increasing exercise intensities while identifying any potential limitations (e.g. chest pain or shortness of breath).

### On the day of your test

Please make sure you:

- do not eat a heavy meal
- wear **comfortable clothing** and **supportive footwear**. Women should wear either a top with a skirt/trousers as we will need to attach a monitor to your chest
- take any medications as normal, unless advised otherwise
- arrive in plenty of time for your appointment. If you are late we may have to reschedule it

### What to expect at your appointment

During the test the physiologists will continuously record your heart's rhythm and electrical activity (ECG) and your blood pressure. The test involves walking on a treadmill and gradually increasing your speed until you experience symptoms such as tiredness, shortness of breath or chest discomfort. When you experience these symptoms you should tell the physiologist doing the test.

The test takes about 30 minutes in total.

---

## Are there any risks associated with this test?

Complications are rare (1 in 10,000) but there is a low risk of:

- heart rhythm disorders
- heart attack
- collapse

## When will I receive the results?

You will receive the results of your test at your follow-up outpatient appointment. The results will not be sent directly to your GP.

Depending on your results, the physician may recommend further tests.

## Cardiac investigations department contact details

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the appropriate cardiac investigations department:

<b>Charing Cross Hospital</b>	<b>Hammersmith Hospital</b>	<b>St Mary's Hospital</b>
Fifth floor Charing Cross Hospital Fulham Palace Road London W6 8RF Telephone: <b>020 3311 1028</b>	Ground floor, B block Hammersmith Hospital Du Cane Road London W12 0HS Telephone: <b>020 3313 3951</b>	Waller cardiovascular unit Ground floor Mary Stanford Wing St Mary's Hospital Praed Street London W2 1NY Telephone: <b>020 3312 1241</b>

## How do I make a comment about my visit?

If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3313 0088** (Charing Cross and Hammersmith hospitals), or **020 3312 7777** (St Mary's Hospital). You can also email PALS at [imperial.pals@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.pals@nhs.net) The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:  
Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street  
London W2 1NY  
Email: [ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net](mailto:ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net)  
Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

## Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:  
[imperial.communications@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.communications@nhs.net)

Cardiology department  
Published: July 2021  
Review date: July 2024  
Reference no: 2662

© Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust