



OPTIMUM

Life Reinsurance

“ The strength
of expertise ”

Learning Series - #2



Making sense of medical terminology - CARDIAC TESTS

Resting electrocardiogram

Also called an ECG or EKG

A test that records the electrical activity of the heart; it is used to help diagnose certain heart abnormalities, such as possible ischemia, old heart attack, enlarged heart.



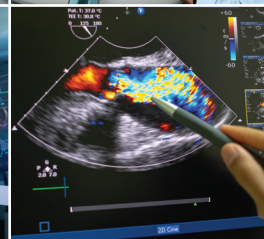
Resting echocardiogram

Using sound waves, detailed real time images of the heart are created which are helpful in determining flows in and out of valves, murmurs, heart enlargement, old heart attack/damage.



Stress ECG

A test that involves walking on a treadmill or pedaling a stationary bike at increasing levels of difficulty while heart rate and rhythm, blood pressure and the electrical activity of the heart (using electrocardiography) are monitored. Good for determining ischemia and blockage of arteries.



Stress echocardiogram

A test in which ultrasound is performed of the heart before and after the heart is stressed either through exercise or a medication. It can evaluate changes to heart motion with exercise and determine areas where supply of blood might be mismatched with demand.

Nuclear and contrast studies

Myocardial perfusion scan

Also called a MPI or MIBI or Thallium Scan

A cardiac nuclear study showing blood-flow patterns to the heart muscles. Similar diagnostic value to stress ECHO but uses a contrast (thallium or sestamibi) with CT imaging rather than ultrasonic technology.

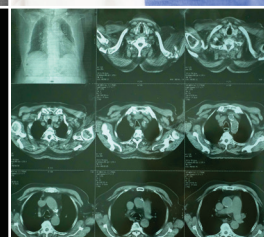
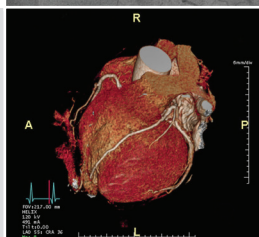


Cardiac catheterization

A diagnostic procedure in which a catheter is placed in a large artery in the leg or arm and advanced to the heart to check for blood pressure within the heart, vascular blockages, oxygen in the blood, and/or pumping ability of the heart muscle. It is used in conjunction with angiogram.

Angiogram

In a conventional angiogram, a dye is injected into the bloodstream and x-rays are taken to visualize the blood vessels. In other instances, CT or MRI can be used to create three dimensional pictures of blood vessels. For now, it is considered the gold standard in assessing cardiovascular risks.



Calcium score

A cardiac CT scan without contrast that measures calcium deposits in coronary arteries which may or may not be blocked. Increased calcium provides indirect evidence of arteriosclerosis and the likelihood of arterial blockage.

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