



Cardiac Nuclear Medicine Exam

Exam scheduling

(218)249-5593

St. Luke's

(218)249-5555

Diagnostic Imaging

(218)249-5222

www.slhduluth.com/hospital/imaging/

Exam Information

Diagnostic Imaging

What is a cardiac nuclear medicine exam?

A small amount of radioactive material (with no side effects) is injected through an I.V. The cardiac images are used to check the blood flow and function of your heart.

How is the exam performed?

An IV will be placed and the radiopharmaceutical will be injected. There will be a 45 min wait to allow the material to circulate to your heart; during this wait you will be instructed to drink carbonated water (provided), to eat crackers (provided), and if possible, to walk the hallways. You will be instructed to lie on the imaging table, as still as possible, with your arms above your head. The technologist will help you get comfortable. A camera will be positioned very close to the area being examined. You will then undergo the stress portion of the test. Your heart will be stressed using medication or by walking on a treadmill. You'll have another waiting period followed by another set of pictures.

This test can take 3-4 hours to complete.

How should I prepare for the exam?

- Bring a list of your current medications.
- Wear comfortable clothing and shoes.
- Do not eat or drink caffeinated products (no decaf coffee)
- A light meal is suggested up to 2 hours prior to exam.
- No tobacco products for at least 4 hours prior to exam.

What will I feel during the exam?

For the stress portion of the test, the blood flow to the heart will be increased by either walking on a treadmill or by medication. If given medication, you may feel briefly anxious, dizzy, queasy, shaky, or short of breath. Severe reactions are rare. Most patients can resume normal activity shortly after the exam. The radioactive material decays away and is eliminated through body fluids.

Who interprets the exam and when will I get my results?

After the exam, a cardiologist will review your study and send a written report to the ordering physician. That physician will then contact you with your results.