

EXERCISE STRESS TEST INFORMATION

You have been scheduled for an exercise stress test. The purpose of this test is to learn whether physical exertion produces any abnormal symptoms or electrocardiographic changes. This information is valuable in helping to determine whether you have an abnormality of the heart. The test also enables your doctor to evaluate the severity of your symptoms and/or your response to treatment. This information is very useful in formulating and guiding your treatment regimen.

You will be asked to come to **West Penn Cardiology Associates at 5140 Liberty Avenue** for the test (free valet parking is available at the front entrance). If for any reason you cannot keep your appointment or do not wish to have the test, please call our office at (412) 682-2100 extension 109 **no later than 24 hours before your appointment.** The materials for some of the tests are specially ordered for each patient 24 hours ahead of time. **You may have a light meal and your medications prior to testing unless blood work is needed or your physician advises you not to take specific medications. Do not ingest caffeine (including coffee, tea, colas or chocolate) for at least 12 hours prior to the test.** Wear comfortable clothes and shoes, preferably tennis shoes.

Please review the consent form and bring the **unsigned** form with you. We have already explained the potential benefits of this test to you. What about the risks? Very rarely, serious and even fatal complications of such testing have occurred. Surveys suggest that the risk of a fatal complication is in the range of 1 in 10,000. The risk of a heart attack or stroke is about 4 in 10,000. The Exercise Laboratory staff will explain the usefulness and safety of this test based on your individual case and then ask you to sign the consent.

Your exercise test will be performed by a physician or designee. A brief history and physical will be performed. The exercise electrocardiogram monitor will be connected and after that a routine electrocardiogram will be taken. You will be allowed to practice on the treadmill before the actual test is given. A small intravenous line may be started, at the physician's discretion. During the test, the speed and the tilt of the treadmill will be changed every 3 minutes as long as you are able to continue walking. Your electrocardiogram and blood pressure will be monitored during and after the test. You will be questioned periodically during the test about how you are feeling. If you experience any symptoms such as chest pain, shortness of breath or dizziness, please let us know immediately. The test will be stopped if you develop certain symptoms, if your electrocardiogram shows a change that requires stopping or when you are extremely tired. At the end of the test, the treadmill will slow down and then stopped. You will then be assisted to a resting position and will remain there until your blood pressure and electrocardiogram return to baseline. This usually takes 3-10 minutes. If nuclear imaging is to be performed, a radioisotope may be injected at rest and/or at peak exercise. After the exercise test, you will go to the Nuclear Laboratory and pictures will be taken of your heart. Two sets of images will be obtained (one at rest and one after stress). The entire test requires on average 3-4 hours including imaging and stress testing.

Name: _____ Date: _____