



ASSESSMENT TESTS

There are many tests you will have during your assessment. We have listed the main ones here:

Echocardiogram

For this test a technician places you an instrument like a microphone on your chest in several different places. The test uses sound waves to determine the size of the chambers of your heart, the thickness of the heart muscle, the function of the heart valves and it detects any blood clot in the heart chambers.

Gated Blood Pool Scan

During this procedure, radio-active dye is injected into a vein and pictures are taken of your heart by a special machine. This test provides us with information about your heart's pumping ability. It measures your heart's ejection fraction, a number that shows how much blood your heart pumps out (ejects) with each beat. A lower number indicates a weaker heart muscle.

Angiogram (Cardiac Catheterization)

Depending on your heart or lung problem you may or may not require a coronary angiogram. This test assesses your coronary arteries which are the blood vessels that supply the heart muscle with blood. These can be narrowed due to smoking, hypertension, high cholesterol and if narrowed can result in a heart attack. The test involves an injection of dye into the femoral artery in the groin and a series of pictures are taken after the injection. This test will help determine if there is a problem with the heart valves, the extent of your heart disease, and the best form of treatment which may be something other than transplantation.

Right Heart Catheterization

This is an important test to perform as a part of your evaluation for a heart transplant. When the heart's pumping action is decreased the blood pressure in the lungs can be increased. If the blood pressure in the lungs is too high and cannot be reduced with medication a transplanted heart may not work properly because it cannot pump against a lot of resistance. The test is performed by placing a special catheter (Swan-Ganz) into the jugular vein on the right side of your neck. This allows measurement of the pressure in your heart and lungs. If the pressures are too high you will be given medication (Nipride) to try to decrease these pressures. This test may be repeated from time to time while you are on the transplant waiting list.

Lung Function Test

This test measures the function, capacity and condition of your lungs. You will be asked to take deep breaths and blow into a mouth piece that is attached to a machine.



ASSESSMENT TESTS

24 Hour Holter Monitor

A Holter monitor is a small portable monitoring device that you wear for 24 hours to document any irregularities in your heart rhythm.

24 Hour Urine Test

This involves collecting all urine passed for 24 hours. This test will assess the function of your kidneys.

Dobutamine Thallium Heart Stress Test

This test involves having a small intravenous injection of Dobutamine, a medicine which stresses your heart as if you were performing exercise. Following this, a series of scans will be performed to assess the heart's response to stress. The initial part of your test will take approximately 1 to 1.5 hours. You will probably need to have a follow-up scan to assess how the heart responds to a period of rest. This is done 3-4 hours later and takes about 45 mins.

VQ or Ventilation Perfusion Scan. First you will be asked to breathe in a special gas and some pictures are taken of your lungs. This measures lung ventilation. Then you will be given an injection of a radioactive material and some more pictures are taken of your lungs. This measures the blood flow to your lungs.

Dexa Scan

This is a simple x-ray that measures the density of your bones and shows whether you are at risk of developing osteoporosis.

O.P.G (Orthopantomogram)

This is an x-ray of your teeth and jaw to exclude infection. Prior to your transplant, it is important to maintain good nutrition to maximise your health and aid recovery. The dietitian is available to assist you with your eating program or any problem you may have, for example: - a poor appetite and/or you are losing weight - excessive weight - high cholesterol. Any queries or questions regarding the adequacy of your eating pattern. Your dietitian will contact you during your assessment or in the outpatient assessment clinic.