

Thallium Radionuclide Imaging

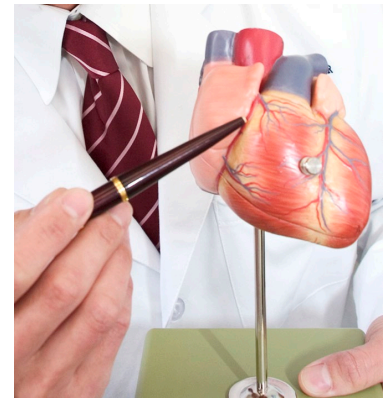
A test to assess your heart muscle

This handout explains a study that will help your doctor assess the health of your heart muscle.

What is this study for?

This study assesses your heart muscle. Most times, it is done for patients who have *coronary artery disease*.

The test results will help your doctor know where better blood flow would benefit your heart. This will help your doctor decide what treatment will work best for you.



This test will help us assess your heart health.

How do I prepare?

You will need to *fast* (not eat or drink anything) for 4 hours before the study begins. We advise drinking plenty of plain water during this time.

What happens during the study?

The entire study takes about 7 hours. It uses a radioactive *tracer* called *thallium* that helps us to see your heart muscle in the imaging pictures.

A nuclear medicine technologist will be present for the study. Here is what to expect:

- The first part of the test takes 60 to 90 minutes.
- You will sit in a chair. We will place a small, thin, flexible tube into a vein in your arm or hand. This tube is called an *intravenous (IV) catheter*. We will then inject a small amount of the tracer into the IV. After the injection, we remove the IV catheter.

- About 10 to 15 minutes later, we will take pictures of your heart using a special camera.
- After the first set of pictures is taken, you will be able to leave the clinic for 6 hours. There are no restrictions during this time. You can eat what you like and do your normal activities.
- 6 hours later, you must return to the clinic. We will then take more pictures. You will **not** need an injection for this set of pictures. This part of the test will take about 1 hour.

What are the risks of this study?

- The radioactive tracer has no side effects, but some patients report a metallic taste in their mouth.
- If you have had other imaging studies, it may affect the results of this test. Tell the technologist if you have had any other imaging studies in the last month that used a tracer.
- The radiation used in this test is similar to the amount used for a *computed tomography* (CT) scan of the belly.

How do I get the results?

It will take a few days to get the results of your test. The provider who ordered the test will either talk with you about your results or tell you how to access them.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

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