

## MYOCARDIAL PERFUSION SCANS

### **What are they used for?**

These scans allow visualisation of blood flow through your heart. The information gained from heart scans can be used to detect coronary artery disease and coronary stenosis. Heart scans are also used to assess damage that may have been caused by heart attacks, and to decide on treatment options such as bypass heart surgery or angioplasties.

### **What is typically involved?**

The radiotracer injected into your arm travels in the bloodstream and is picked up by the heart muscle. Areas of the heart muscle that have a good supply of blood pick up the tracer right away. If an area of the heart receives less blood than the rest of the heart, due to a narrowed or blocked artery, it will pick up less radioactivity and will show up as a lighter area in the images. A set of images of your heart is taken after you exercise, and another set is taken while you are at rest. If you are unable to exercise, a drug called Dipyridamole may be given to you to instead, to replicate your heart's activity in exercise. Your doctor will advise you on what type of stress test you will be doing.

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### How should I prepare?

Like all nuclear medicine scans at TeleMed, Myocardial perfusion scans are bulk billed and so it is important that you bring your Medicare card with you on the day. When done in combination, the resting and stress phases of a myocardial perfusion scan can take up to 4 hours. You may wish to bring some reading material or something to keep you occupied in the waiting periods. You should have a light breakfast and sip water regularly before your scan.

If your doctor has advised that you will be getting Dipyridamole during your heart scan. It is important that you fast for 4 hours before your scan. It is also important that you refrain from eating or drinking any caffeine for 24 hours before your scan. Caffeinated foods include:

- Tea and Coffee
- 'Decaf' Tea and Coffee
- Chocolate or Chocolate drinks
- Milo
- Cocoa
- Cola drinks
- Energy and Sports Drinks
- Herbal Tea (some contain small amounts of caffeine)
- Medications containing Theophylline (typically in asthma medications)