

Print out this list and take it to your next visit to discuss these tests with your doctor.

TESTS FOR HEART DISEASE

A Stress Test

The most familiar of the three, a stress test takes less than an hour and serves as the baseline for understanding the health of your heart. It is done on a treadmill - in sneakers and street clothes - with complete supervision. You set the pace, and no one will ask you to do more than you can.

Coronary Calcium Test

This easy and painless test assesses your level of risk for a heart attack by measuring the amount of calcium deposit(s) in your arteries. This is a coronary CT scan, done with the same equipment as a CT scan.

CIMT: Carotid intima-media thickness test

Another easy, painless and quick test, a CIMT measures the thickness of the inner two layers of the carotid artery, the artery located at the side of your neck. This test can let doctors know if there is any thickening in the artery walls long before you might experience symptoms of a cardiac incident. This test is a sonogram of the carotid artery in the neck—Gel on the neck, quick scan, off the table in fifteen minutes!

If the results of the CIMT are concerning, your doctor will request further tests such as a Doppler Ultrasound—an ultrasound to watch blood flow through the vessels and heart, a MRI angiogram or MRA—which allows her to see inside your blood vessels, or a Cardiac CT scan—a dye-free, multiple x-ray that provides images of the heart and blood vessels. All of these will give defining information about the state of your arteries and risk level for a heart attack.