

TESTS FOR HEART DISEASE

Because you have had a heart attack, you will need to have more tests over the days while you are in hospital.

ECG: to look for any changes in the electrical activity of your heart to find out if there are any problems with your heart rate and rhythm. Heart rhythm problems can sometimes happen as a result of a heart attack.

You may also have some other tests, to look more closely at your heart and how it is working, and to help decide on the best form of treatment for you.

These tests may include the following.

- **Chest X-ray** – A chest X-ray can show if your heart has become enlarged and if there is fluid around your heart. It also shows your lungs.
- **Echocardiogram** – This is an ultrasound picture of your heart which can give accurate information about the pumping action of your heart, and about the structure of your heart and its valves.
- **Exercise ECG** – This is an ECG that is recorded continually, usually while you are walking on a treadmill. An exercise ECG can help to decide whether you need to have a coronary angiogram (see the next page), and later on can help decide what level of physical activity you can start doing when you begin cardiac rehabilitation.
- **Stress echocardiogram** – In some cases, if the doctors need more detailed information, a stress echocardiogram may be needed. This is when an echocardiogram is done while the heart is put under stress by increasing its heart rate either with exercise or with a certain type of medicine. Or you may need to have a different type of scan.

- **CORONARY ANGIOGRAPHY**

One of the tests you will probably have while you are in hospital is a coronary angiogram.

You will be given a local anaesthetic in either your wrist or your groin.

An incision (cut) is then made in your wrist or groin, and a catheter (a fine, flexible, hollow tube) is passed into an artery.

The doctor will pass the catheter into your coronary arteries.

During the procedure, some dye is injected into the catheter to make your coronary arteries show up on the X-ray.

You may feel a warm flushing feeling when this happens.

The doctor can then see if there are narrowings within your coronary arteries.

If the coronary angiogram shows that a section of one or more of your coronary arteries is severely narrowed, your cardiologist may advise you to have:

- either a **coronary angioplasty** – also called a PCI (percutaneous coronary intervention)
- Or **coronary bypass surgery**.