

ERGOMETRIC TEST

EXERTION ELECTROCARDIOGRAM

A poor supply of blood to the heart from the coronary arteries can be sufficient when at rest, but not when a greater exertion is required by the heart. Exertion testing consists in using the electrocardiogram to check the heart under conditions of physical exertion. The patient may be made to pedal on a cycling machine or walk on a running machine. The electrocardiographic test is carried out by means of adhesive electrodes placed on the chest. Artery pressure is checked at the same time. The effort is variable depending on the capabilities of the patient: for the test to be useful, a significant increase in the heart-beat and the pressure in the arteries is required.

The test can also be useful as prevention in the case of patients showing numerous or serious risk factors, for whom there is a greater possibility of disease, or patients who, even while presenting no symptoms, have a history of heart disease (previous heart attack, bypass, etc.). One further category of people for whom the exertion test is recommended is that of sedentary individuals who are no longer young and decide to take up a sport.