

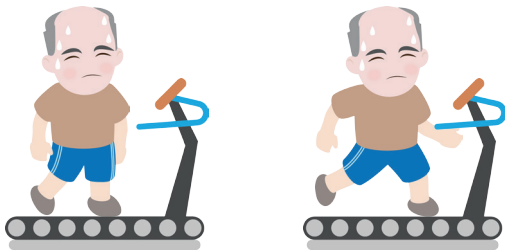
## Before you begin

# CHOOSING A STRESS TEST— EXERCISE OR PHARMACOLOGICAL?

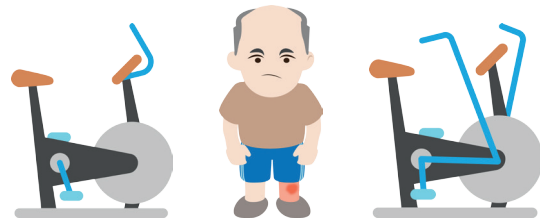
The first question you should ask yourself is whether the patient can exercise sufficiently to stress the heart. As long as the answer is yes, then you would choose exercise.

### *We get more information from an exercise test.*

- In addition to being “positive” or “negative” for myocardial ischemia an exercise test provides information on exercise capacity, HR and BP responses, and signs and symptoms in response to exertion.
- Pharmacological testing does not provide this additional information.
- The exercise stress test provides more information on which to base prognosis and exercise prescription.



For example, a patient who becomes ischemic at a low level of exercise is clinically different from a patient who only becomes ischemic at relatively high levels of exertion.



Patients who cannot exercise sufficiently on the treadmill due to orthopedic problems, balance issues, and so on, can often be tested on the cycle ergometer or arm/leg ergometer.



*It is best to only use pharmacological tests on patients who cannot be stressed sufficiently by exercise.*