



PACIFIC COAST
CARDIOLOGY
& RESEARCH

PATIENT PRE-TEST INSTRUCTIONS:

Vascular Testing: Carotid Ultrasound

No Prep needed for this test.

***YOU SHOULD NOT STOP ANY MEDICATIONS WITHOUT CONTACTING YOUR PRESCRIBING DOCTOR. USE THE FOLLOWING LIST IN ORDER TO SPEAK WITH YOUR DOCTOR:

Commonly Used Beta Blockers: Blocadren (timolol), Coreg (carvedilol), Inderal (propranolol), Lopressor (metoprolol), Tenormin (atenolol), Toprol –XL (metoprolol), Trandate (labetalol), Visken (pindolol), Bystolic.

Caffeinated Food and Beverages: Coffee including “decaffeinated”, teas, cocoa and any food containing cocoa (chocolate), and soft drinks.

Carotid Ultrasound

What is a screening ultrasound of the carotid arteries?

A screening ultrasound of the carotid arteries is a fast, painless, and non-invasive way of evaluating your carotid arteries for disease. The ultrasound image may show narrowing where the diseased segment of the artery is. Ultrasound can also be used to study the speed of blood flow at the point of narrowing. Red cells have to speed up to get through the narrowed segments, and the increase in flow velocity is related to the degree of narrowing. While most exams will be normal, this test can provide evidence of significant carotid artery disease early enough to be treated in time to decrease the risk of a significant stroke.

What will I experience during the procedure?

You are positioned face-up on the examination table. The sonographer will then spread some warm gel on your skin and place the transducer against your neck, moving it back and forth over the area of interest until the desired images are captured. You may actually hear pulse-like sounds that change in pitch as the blood flow is monitored and measured. Once the imaging is

complete, the gel will be wiped off your skin. After an ultrasound exam, you should be able to resume your normal activities immediately.

How should I prepare for the procedure?

No preparation is necessary in advance. You should wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothing for your ultrasound exam. You will need to remove all clothing and jewelry in the area to be examined. You may be asked to wear a gown during the procedure.

Who interprets the results and how do I get them?

A cardiologist, a physician specifically trained to supervise and interpret ultrasound examinations, will analyze the images and send a signed report to your primary care or referring physician, who will share the results with you within 48 hours.