

Patient Information Leaflet

What is an Echocardiogram?

Produced By: Cardiology



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If you require this leaflet in another language, large print or another format, please contact the Quality Team, telephone 01983 534850, who will advise you.

What is an Echocardiogram?

An echocardiogram (or 'echo') is an ultrasound scan of the heart. High frequency sound waves are transmitted into the body and echoes are received back onto a TV monitor showing the heart's internal structure. This will allow your doctor to have information about your heart's pumping chambers and valves from outside the chest wall.

Will it hurt?

No, it is a painless test and no needles are involved. Ultrasound does not use radiation or x-rays. There are no risks associated with an echo and it can safely be performed on adults, children and babies alike. There is no risk to unborn babies.

Do I need to do anything before the test?

No, you do not have to do anything in preparation for the test. Please continue to take your medications as normal. You may eat and drink as normal before the test.

What will happen on the day?

The test will usually be performed by a Cardiac Physiologist who is a trained Echocardiographer. The test will take place in a private room. You will be asked to remove all clothing from the waist up and females will be offered a gown. You will then be asked to lie on your left side on a couch. Lying on your side will allow the Echocardiographer to obtain good images of the heart. Gel will be applied to the chest area and a small probe moved over the skin, and sometimes on your stomach or neck to view the heart from different angles. A female chaperone is usually available, as although the test does not include an examination of the breasts your chest may be exposed.

We sometimes have to train Cardiac Physiologists or Cardiology Registrars. If the person doing the scan has to bring in a more senior person, don't worry. This is usually because they are being supervised, not because some abnormality has been found.

Valuables should not be brought into the hospital. If patients have to bring in valuable items they should ask a nurse to store them safely and request a receipt for the items. You may not be able to have the valuable items returned if the time of discharge from hospital is out of hours.

We are sorry but the Trust cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage to items not given for safe keeping.

You can get further information on all sorts of health issues online at: <http://www.nhs.uk/>

For Health advice and out of hours GP service please call the NHS 111 service on: 111

We Value Your Views On Our Service

If you wish to comment on the care which you, your relative or friend has received, we will be pleased to hear from you. Please speak to the person in charge of the ward, clinic or service in the first instance or ask them to contact the Quality Team. If you wish to contact them directly, telephone on 534850.

Alternatively you may prefer to write to:

Chief Executive
Isle Of Wight NHS Trust
St Mary's Hospital
Newport
Isle of Wight
PO30 5TG

You can also share any concerns you have about our services with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) on 03000 61 61 61 or at enquiries@ccq.org.uk

All NHS sites are no smoking areas.

If you would like help and advice to stop smoking please call: Freephone 0800 169 0 169 to talk to the NHS Smoking Helpline.

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