

Echocardiogram

Cardiology Department Patient Information Leaflet

What is it?

- An Echocardiogram or 'Echo' is a scan that uses Ultrasound to produce pictures of the heart.
- The test is without side effects and does not use Radiation. You may feel some discomfort on your chest wall due to the positioning of the probe.

Why is it being done?

An Echo gives your doctor information about how well the heart pumps and whether your heart valves are working properly.

What does it involve?

- The test is carried out in a darkened room, and you will be asked to remove your clothing above the waist and then put on a gown. You will be asked initially to lie on your back and then move to your left-hand side. The Physiologist will take several measurements during the test. If you require a chaperone, please contact the Cardiology Department before the day of your test.
- An ultrasound probe covered in a small amount of gel is placed on your chest and will be moved to various positions including your left side, beneath the rib cage and to the base of your throat. Multiple images of your heart are then produced and recorded.
- During the echo you will hear sounds coming from the machine. These represent blood flow through the valves of heart.
- Obtaining clear images requires concentration and a steady hand, please bear with the physiologists if they are quiet during parts of the test.

- The echocardiogram will take approximately 45 minutes to complete.
- Relatives and friends are permitted to stay with you during the test but must switch mobile phones off.

Are there any special precautions I need to take before the test?

- No
- Please take all your medication as normal.
- Please bring a full list of your current medication with you.

After the Echocardiogram

- Once the echo is complete you can get dressed and leave the department. There are no limitations as to what you can do after the scan, carry on with your normal activities. The results will be sent to the requesting doctor and will be discussed with you on your next appointment.
- Your doctor may have requested other tests and if that is the case information about them should be enclosed with this letter or separately. It is important that all the tests arranged are carried out.
- If you have any questions, please ask the cardiac physiologist or doctor.
- If you have any queries about this appointment, please call the Cardiology Department on telephone no. 01384 456111 ext. 3363