



The Dudley Group
NHS Foundation Trust

Saline Bubble / Contrast Echocardiogram

Cardiology Department Patient Information Leaflet

If you need to arrange NHS Transport, (Ambulance), and your appointment has been made for the afternoon, please call us, so we can change your appointment to the morning.

This will help prevent any delays in the transport collecting you to go home.

What are these tests?

- These tests are similar to an **Echocardiogram** or 'Echo' is a scan that uses Ultrasound to produce pictures of the heart.
- The tests do not use Radiation. You may feel some discomfort on your chest wall due to the positioning of the probe.
- A cannula will need to be inserted for these tests

Why is it being done?

Contrast and saline bubble studies are usually performed to provide more in depth information about the structure and function of your heart.

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 and beneath the rib cage.

Contrast Study

- A **contrast study** may be needed following on from or instead of an echocardiogram, using a liquid (contrast) to outline certain areas of the heart. This involves putting a small cannular into a vein in your arm so an injection can be given. The contrast is low risk; however you will be asked whether you have any allergies.

Saline Bubble Study

- A **saline bubble study** may be needed following on from or instead of an echocardiogram. This involves putting a small cannular into a vein in your arm so an injection can be given. A small amount of your blood is mixed with saline, this is then agitated to produce micro bubbles. The micro bubbles allow the doctor to see if there is any communication between the right and left side of the heart. This is very safe procedure.
- If you have a contrast/saline bubble study, there is a small risk of bruising around the site of the injection.
- Relatives and friends will not be able to stay with you during the test (except for exceptional circumstances)

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 test

- Once the echo is complete you can get dressed. You will be asked to sit in the waiting room for 15 minutes before going home. 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. 3082

To reach the Cardiology Department proceed as follows:

Enter front foyer via the Main Hospital Entrance and turn to face the large reception desk on the left. To the right-hand side of the desk there is a set of double doors. Pass through the double doors and follow the corridor until you see the Cardiology Reception on the right-hand side.