

Echocardiography

Echocardiography is a non-invasive test that uses sound waves to create moving images of the heart. It is more detailed than an x-ray image, but without radiation. There are no known risks associated with it. Echocardiography allows doctors to see the heart beating and the structure of the heart, thereby allowing them to evaluate the function of the heart muscle and its valves. It can help doctors evaluate 1) heart murmurs 2) the pumping function of the heart, and 3) patients who have had heart attacks. It also is a screening test for heart disease in certain groups of patients. Pressures are also measured and valvular function is evaluated. The test is also known as either a Transthoracic Echocardiogram (TTE); Doppler Ultrasound of the Heart; or a Surface Echo.

What to Expect

You will be asked to disrobe from the waist up and will lie on your back on an exam table. Electrodes will be attached to your chest and then gel will be spread on your chest. A transducer, an instrument that transmits high-frequency sound waves, will be placed on your ribs near the breast bone and directed towards your heart. You will feel a slight pressure on your chest from the transducer. You may be asked to breathe in a certain way or roll over your left side. The transducer will pick up echoes from the sound waves and transmit them as electrical impulses. The echocardiography machine will convert the impulses into moving pictures of the heart. The test will take about 30 minutes. Your doctor will receive a written report about 48 hours later.

How to Prepare

1. No preparation is required.
2. Please arrive 10 minutes before your appointment and bring the requisition/order form for the test. Please bring your insurance card with you.

Appointments

Call 216.382.2853. When you schedule your appointment, please inform the scheduler of any other test(s) you have scheduled for that day as well as any food allergies or intolerances. Also, please give the same information to the receptionist on the day of your scan.