



Resting Echocardiogram Test

Preparation Needed:

Please read all instructions carefully and follow them exactly as outlined below. Failure to do so may result in the cancellation of your test.

Please refrain from using lotions and other oily substances that can interfere with contacts.

You can wear whatever you like. On the day of the test, you may eat and drink as you normally would. Take all your medications at the usual times, as prescribed by your doctor.

Brief Description of Test:

An echocardiogram (often called "echo") is a non-invasive test that uses sound waves (ultrasound) to provide pictures of the heart's valves and chambers and to evaluate the pumping action of the heart. Echo is often combined with Doppler ultrasound and color Doppler to evaluate blood flow across the heart's valves.

A cardiac sonographer will place three electrodes (small, flat, sticky patches) on your chest. The sonographer will ask you to lie on your left side on the exam table. The sonographer will place a wand (called a sound-wave transducer) on several areas of your chest. The wand will have a small amount of cool gel on the end, which will not harm your skin. This gel helps get clearer pictures. Sounds are part of the Doppler signal. You may or may not hear the sounds during the test.

You may be asked to change positions during the exam in order to take pictures of different areas of your heart. You may be asked to hold your breath at times. You should feel no major discomfort during the test. You may feel coolness from the gel on the transducer and a slight pressure of the transducer on your chest. The echo test takes about 40 minutes. After the test, you may get dressed and go home or go to other scheduled appointments.

Why Am I Taking This Test?

Your doctor has ordered this test to assess the heart's structure and function. Your doctor may be checking for problems with the heart muscle, valves and pericardium, and for the presence of heart tumors, and congenital heart disease. In addition, this test is used to evaluate the effectiveness of medical or surgical treatments and/or to follow the progress of valve disease.

Please call our office with additional questions.