

Transthoracic echocardiogram

Purpose

An transthoracic echocardiogram is a cardiac ultrasound of your heart. An echocardiogram is generally painless and uses a transducer that is gently moved across the chest to obtain ultrasound pictures of your heart. The test show how your heart beats and pumps blood. It proved valuable information about the structure and size of your heart and how your heart valves function. Cardiac ultrasound is not harmful in any way

Before the test

1. Please allow one hour for the test, this includes preparation and the imaging portion.
2. Wear comfortable attire as you will be lying on an exam table, while the sonographer obtains your images.
3. There are no dietary restrictions for this test.
4. Bring your medication in their original containers with you to the test, so we may obtain an accurate list.

During the test

1. You will be asked to remove all upper body clothing, to put on a gown with the opening to the front, and to lie down on an examining table.
2. Three adhesive electrodes (small sticky patches) will be placed on your chest to provide the electrocardiogram for the test. This monitors your heart rate and rhythm during the test.
3. To improve the quality of the pictures, a colorless gel is applied to the area of the chest where the transducer will be placed.
4. In order to obtain good quality images, it is necessary to apply some pressure with the transducer . If the pressure creates discomfort, please tell the sonographer.
5. You may hear somer sounds when the sonographer activates the Doppler portion of the study.
6. Pictures of the heart are recorded from several different locations on the chest, from the abdomen looking up and from the neck area looking down at the major vessels coming from the heart.
7. Various measurements are taken, and all of the data are analyzed by your cardiologist after the test is completed.
8. Your cardiologist may wish to do some additional scanning before you leave, to look at specific areas of the heart.

9. The video or digital file of the test is retained for future reference.
10. Information gained from this test helps your doctor make an accurate diagnosis and develop a treatment plan that is best for you.

Special Instructions

There is no special preparation for this test and there are no pretest dietary restrictions. You should continue to take any prescribed medications before and after the test.