

What happens after the examination?

Following the scan, the Cardiac Physiologist will remove the electrodes from your chest, wipe off the ultrasound gel from your skin, help you off the couch (if required) and escort you out of the Echo room.

After you have left the Echo room, the Cardiac Physiologist will write a report based on the measurements and scan images acquired during the scan. Your Doctor will receive the written report in one or two days. The Cardiac Physiologist will not provide you with any results at the time of the examination.

How do I prepare for an Echo?

There is no special preparation required for an Echo. You should come as you are and eat and drink as normal. If you take medication, continue to take as prescribed unless your doctor has specified otherwise.

Compliments & Comments

Please help us to develop our services and improve our performance.

- Do you have any suggestions on how we might improve our service?
- Would you like to compliment us on a job well done?
- Have we fallen short of what you expect?

Contact us at the address, e-mail, or telephone number below:

Echotech Ltd, 64 Goldsmith Avenue, Southsea, Hampshire PO4 8FH

Tel. 023 9283 2016 email. enquiries@echotech.co.uk

Complaints

Have we fallen short of the standards we set ourselves? If so please contact us directly so we can address the issue and have an opportunity to set things right. We will inform you of our formal complaints procedure and will deal with your complaint as a priority.

If you are still unhappy with our service you may contact the Care Quality Commission, the national healthcare regulator.

Care Quality Commission National Correspondence

Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4PA

Telephone: 03000 616161 email: enquiries@cq.org.uk web: www.cqc.org.uk



Patient Information Leaflet

Echocardiogram



www.echotech.co.uk

What is an Echocardiogram?

An Echocardiogram, also known as an Echo, is an ultrasound scan of the heart which is used to assess both the structure and function of the heart.

Using the same technology that allows Radiographers to see an unborn baby inside a pregnant mother, the test uses ultrasound waves to produce images of the heart on a screen and therefore, is completely safe and painless.

The vast majority of Echo's are performed and reported by specially trained technicians known as Cardiac Physiologists, rather than doctors.

The echo report, produced by the Cardiac Physiologist, will allow your Doctor to evaluate your heart's health.

Why has my Doctor requested I have an Echo?

There are many reasons why Doctors may request that a patient has an Echo, here are just a few:

- If a patient is breathless or has complained of certain symptoms during exertion
- To look for the cause of a heart murmur
- To check the size of the heart chambers
- To check for fluid around the heart
- To check that muscles of the heart are the right thickness and are pumping correctly

What should I expect?

Upon arrival, you will be escorted into the Echo room which will contain an examination couch and an ultrasound machine. The Cardiac Physiologist will then give you a brief explanation of the procedure.

You will be asked to remove your clothing from the waist up and women will be given a paper cover to wear during the procedure. If you need help, the Cardiac Physiologist will assist you in getting onto the couch, where you will be asked to lie on your left side.

The Cardiac Physiologist will then attach three self adhesive electrodes to your chest and then dim the lights to allow them to see the images which will appear on the screen.

The Cardiac Physiologist will apply ultrasound gel to a 'microphone-like' device called a transducer. The transducer sends and receives the harmless ultrasound waves. The gel allows the ultrasound beams to penetrate your chest wall so that it is possible to "see" your heart.

The Cardiac Physiologist will press the transducer against your skin with a moderate pressure to facilitate the transmission of ultrasound waves. This should not be painful, however if it does become uncomfortable, please let the Cardiac Physiologist know.

The Cardiac Physiologist will then begin to acquire ultrasound images and audio recordings by moving the transducer around on your chest, stomach, and neck. The Cardiac Physiologist will be viewing these images on a screen and will take various recordings and measurements in several different areas.

During recording, you may be asked to change your position and to hold your breath. These variations in position and breathing allow the Cardiac Physiologist to obtain the best quality pictures.

The scan will take approximately 30 minutes.

