

What is Echocardiograph?

Echocardiography (ek-o-kar-dee-AH-gruh-fee), also called an echo test, is a test that takes “moving pictures” of the heart with sound waves. You don’t have to stay in the hospital; it’s not surgery and doesn’t hurt. This test is done to help your doctor find out if you have problems with your heart or with how it’s working.



- Suspected heart murmur
- Unexplained chest pains
- Congenital heart defects
- Suspected heart attack
- History of Rheumatic fever
- Suspected swelling of tissue near heart

How is it done?

- You’ll lie on a special bed on you side or back.
- A technician will put special gel on a probe an move it over your chest area.
- Ultra-high-frequency sound waves will pick up reflected images of your heart and valves.
- No X-Rays are used. You cannot hear the sound waves.
- A videotape and photographs of the images are made for the Cardiologist’s review.
- You are awake and can watch during the test.
- The test usually takes between 15 and 30 minutes.
- It can take longer if the doctor wants additional special information.
- There is no pain. There are no side-effects.
- There is no discomfort, except for the chill of the gel and the need to lay in one position for a period of time.

What will the test show?

- The size and shape of your heart
- If you have a problem with your heart’s valves
- If a wall or section of heart muscle is weak and not working correctly
- How well your heart is “pumping”
- If you have a blood clot

Is there a risk?

There is no known risk from this test.

How should I prepare?

- You do not need to take any special medicines before your test.
 - You should take your usual medications.
 - Please bring all of the medicines you regularly take so the Nurse can be sure what you are using.
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