

Information for patients having an Echocardiogram

Echocardiogram

An echocardiogram is a test that takes ultrasound pictures of the heart from the chest. The test will be performed by a Cardiac Physiologist.

How is the test performed?

You will be asked to lay on a couch on your left side with your left arm on a handle above your head. This is to help get clearer images but don't worry if you are unable to adopt this position. Three electrodes (or stickers) will then be placed on your chest to obtain an ECG that allows us to take accurate measurements.

As the test involves ultrasound, a cold gel will be applied to a probe, which is pressed on your chest in various positions.

As a teaching hospital, we have a commitment to training and education and this may mean a student could be observing, or assisting with your test. If you have any objections to this, please let a member of staff know prior to the test.

How long will the test take?

The test will take around 30 minutes for a standard scan. However, it may be longer if your doctor has requested a more detailed study.

Will the test cause me any harm?

The test is completely safe. It uses the same technology as is used for pregnancy scans. You will feel pressure on your chest as the probe is moved around. Some patients may find this slightly uncomfortable.

Can I bring a friend or relative with me to the test?

One person is welcome to come into the room where the test is held if you wish. However you will be asked to remove clothing from your chest.

What should I wear?

You will be asked to undress and take everything off your top half.

Gowns are available for you to change into. It is, therefore, advisable to wear clothing that can easily be removed from the top half of your body.



What about eating and taking medications prior to the test?

The test is unaffected by food and you should continue all medication as usual.

When will I be given the results?

Your results will not be available on the day. The doctor who requested the test will receive a comprehensive report within a week. He/she will then interpret the results in light of your individual history and any other tests you may have had.

If you were referred for this test direct from your GP, please make an appointment with him/her so you can receive your results. If a hospital doctor requested the test, your consultant will write to you with the results or invite you to see them in clinic.

They will also write to your GP with the results. This usually takes around four weeks.

If you are booked in to see the consultant in clinic on the same day, the doctor will go over the results with you then.

Contact details for Cardio-Respiratory Departments:

Doncaster Royal Infirmary

Tel: 01302 642456. Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm.

Bassetlaw Hospital

Tel: 01909 572761

Monday to Friday 8.00am to 4.30pm.

Montagu Hospital

Tel: 01709 649101

Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 4.00pm. Friday 8.30 to 12.30.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

The team are available to help with any concerns/complaints you may have about your experience at the Trust. Their office is in the Main Foyer (Gate 4) of Doncaster Royal Infirmary. Contact can be made either in person or by telephone 8.30am till 5.30pm, Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays) or via email.

Their contact details are:

Telephone: 01302 642764 or 0800 028 8059. Email: dbth.pals.dbh@nhs.net