

CONSULTATION

Please bring all your medications, previous test results and other relevant correspondence.

ECHOCARDIOGRAM

This is an ultrasound examination of the heart which may take about 45 minutes to complete.

On the day of the test

- Wear a 2 piece outfit as you will need to undress to the waist.
- You do not need to fast for an transthoracic echocardiogram test.

During the test:

- You will need to lie on your left side.
- You should not feel any major discomfort.

After the test

- The information collected will be viewed by a Cardiologist who will forward the results to your Doctor.

EXERCISE STRESS TEST / EXERCISE STRESS ECHO

This measures your exercise capacity and monitors your electrocardiogram, heart rate and blood pressure while you exercise on a treadmill (usually – some limited centres have a bicycle). It takes about 30 – 45 minutes to complete. If you are having an Exercise Stress Echo you will have an echo (ultrasound examination of the heart) pre and post exercise. If you cannot walk on a treadmill please advise us prior to the test so that a more appropriate test can be arranged.

On the day of the test

- Bring a list of your current medications.
- Wear a 2 piece outfit and comfortable footwear.
- Do not wear talc, body lotion or neck chains.
- Have a light meal only.
- Do not consume caffeine, alcohol or nicotine 2 hours prior to the test.

Immediately before starting the test

- You will need to undress to the waist.
- Men may require part of the chest to be shaved.
- Electrodes will be placed onto the chest and an ECG lead connected and worn on a belt around your waist.
- A gown is then worn over this in some circumstances.

During the test

- You will be supervised by an experienced Doctor and Cardiac Technician.
- Your blood pressure, pulse rate and electrocardiogram will be monitored continuously.
- The test will be stopped when the Doctor feels it is appropriate.

After the test

- You will be monitored for 5 minutes upon completion of the exercise.
- During this time you will receive some feed back about your performance by the supervising Doctor.
- Drinking water and a towel are available.
- You will be asked to remain seated in reception for a further 10 minutes to ensure you are fully recovered prior to leaving the medical centre.
- A full report will be sent to your Doctor after the results have been reviewed by a Cardiologist.

DOBUTAMINE STRESS ECHOCARDIOGRAM

The test is used to examine your heart and valve function when you are unable to exercise. You will be asked to lie on your left side on an examination couch. Your ECG and blood pressure will be monitored throughout the test. Initial ultrasound images of the heart will be taken from different areas of your chest. A small needle is inserted into a vein and Dobutamine (which is a medication that we use to stress the heart) will be delivered directly into your body.

On the day of the test

- Bring a list of your current medications.
- Do not eat anything for 3 hours prior to the test.
- You may drink water up to 30mins prior to the test.
- Wear a 2 piece out-fit and comfortable footwear.

Immediately before starting the test

- You will need to undress to the waist.
- Men may require part of the chest to be shaved.
- Electrodes will be placed onto the chest and an ECG lead connected.

During the test

- You will be supervised by a team of trained personnel.
- Your blood pressure, pulse rate and electrocardiogram will be monitored continuously.
- You will need to lie on your left side and initial ultrasound images will be taken.
- A needle will be inserted into a vein in the forearm.
- Subsequent ultrasound images will be taken.

After the test

- You will be monitored for 5 minutes upon completion of the test.
- You will be asked to remain seated in reception for a further 10 minutes to ensure you are fully recovered prior to leaving the medical centre.
- A full report will be sent to your Doctor.

HOLTER MONITOR

This is a device which records the electrical activity (ECG) of the heart over a 24 hour period. Connection of the device takes approximately 15 minutes.

On the day of the test

- Please bath/shower in the morning, since you will NOT be able to swim/shower during the next 24 hours.
- Do not use talc, body lotion or wear neck chains.
- Please wear a 2 piece out-fit.

Connection of the device

- Requires that adhesive electrodes be placed on the chest (men may need some hair shaved) and connected to a small tape recorder which is worn across the shoulder or around the waist.

During the monitored period

- If you have symptoms, you should press the event recorder button on the machine and make a note of the symptoms in a special diary which will be given to you.
- Do not use electric blankets and heating pads including waterbed heating devices.

After the period of monitoring

- The equipment and symptom diary must be returned at the specified time.
- A full report will be sent to your Doctor after the results have been reviewed by a Cardiologist.

PATIENT ACTIVATED RECORDER

This is a small device about the size of a small remote control, which will record the heart beat for a short period when it is activated by you whilst you are experiencing symptoms. You will be in possession of the device for up to one week. Connection of the device takes approximately 20 minutes.

On the day of the test

- Do not use talc, body lotion or wear neck chains.
- Please wear a 2 piece out-fit.
- You will be able to remove the device for showering.

Connection of the device

- Requires that adhesive electrodes be placed onto the chest (men may need some hair shaved).

During the test

- If you have symptoms, you should press the event recorder button on the machine and make a note of the symptoms in a special diary which will be given to you.
- Do not use electric blankets and heating pads including waterbed heating devices.

Should you have difficulties with the equipment please notify the office.

After the period of monitoring

- The equipment and symptom diary must be returned at the specified time.
- A full report will be sent to your Doctor after the results have been reviewed by a Cardiologist.

AMBULATORY BLOOD PRESSURE MONITOR

This device automatically measures your blood pressure at regular intervals during the day and night, usually about every 30 minutes during the day and 60 minutes during the night. Connection of the device takes approximately 30 minutes.

On the day of the test

- Please bath/shower in the morning, as you will NOT be able to swim/shower whilst the monitor is being worn.
- Please wear a 2 piece out-fit.

Connection of the device

- Requires that a blood pressure cuff be placed on the upper arm and a small recording device be worn across the shoulder or around the waist.

During the period of monitoring, should you have difficulties with the equipment or feel it may have been dislodged, please notify the office.

After the period of monitoring

- The equipment and symptom diary must be returned at the specified time.
- A full report will be sent to your Doctor after the results have been reviewed by a Cardiologist.

RESTING ECG

This is a recording of the electrical activity of the heart. It takes about 5 minutes to perform.

During the test

- You will need to lie flat on your back.
- Do not use talc, body lotion or wear neck chains.
- Small electrodes will be placed on your body and the electrical activity of your heart recorded. The electrodes are then removed. If you have body hair some small areas may need to be shaved for the test.

After the test

- A report will be sent to your Doctor after the results have been reviewed by a Cardiologist.

Transoesophageal Echo (TOE)



This is an ultrasound examination of the heart that is performed via the oesophagus using an instrument similar to an endoscope (which is what is used when doctors look at the stomach of a person using a small camera) except instead of a camera it has a small ultrasound probe on the end.

This is test performed in a day patient facility and usually you will be able to go home that day. The test itself takes about 30 minutes but there will be some hours spent waiting before and after the test and some sedatives will be given. Therefore you will need to have a small intravenous needle placed in one of your veins. As a result of the sedation please arrange for transport as you should not drive nor travel home alone on the day of the test.

Please bring all your medications with you.

You should not have anything to eat or drink for 6 hours prior to the test.