

Echocardiogram



What is an Echocardiogram?

An echocardiogram, or “echo” as it is commonly referred to, is an ultrasound of your heart. It is one of the most important, non-invasive cardiac investigations available. Sound waves are used to produce an image of your heart. From these images, the size, function and structure of your heart muscle and valves can be assessed. It can also provide information about the pressures within your heart and lungs.

How do I prepare for the Echocardiogram?

There are no special requirements prior to the test. No fasting is required. Please take all your medications as prescribed, unless otherwise instructed by your doctor. Please allow 30 to 45 minutes for the test.

How is the Echocardiogram done?

Our Cardiac Sonographer will ask you to remove all items of clothing from the waist up; ladies may request a gown or sheet to cover up if necessary. Three small electrodes and wires will be placed on your chest so we can monitor your heart rate. You will be asked to lie on your side and the lights will be turned down. A small transducer with gel on the end will be placed on various positions on your chest. The transducer is positioned in between ribs and a small amount of pressure is needed to obtain quality images. During the procedure the Sonographer will ask you to change your position and you may be asked to hold your breath. There are no known risks associated with echocardiograms, as there is no x-ray or radiation involved. You will not feel anything from the ultrasound, however, some people experience slight discomfort due to the position of the transducer in between ribs.

When will I receive my results?

A Cardiologist will review your images and will generally complete their report on the day of your test. The results will then be sent to your referring doctor for discussion. If you will be seeing your doctor within 24 hours of having the test, please advise the Nepean Cardiology staff.