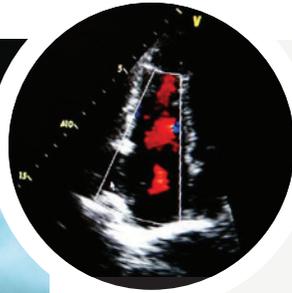


# Echocardiography

Patient information

## What is it?

Echocardiography, often called an 'echo', uses sound waves to create images of your heart. Your cardiologist can use these images to assess your heart muscle, valves, large blood vessels and blood flow. An echocardiogram also provides information about the blood pressures within the chambers of your heart and lungs.



### Example of an echocardiogram

Blood is seen flowing (coloured area) from one chamber of the heart to another.

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## What should I expect?

Echocardiography is a type of ultrasound and is not dangerous. There is no radiation or X-ray. You should not feel any major discomfort during the test, which can take up to 45 minutes.

During the test, we will ask you to lie on an examination bed on your left side. A cardiac sonographer will attach small metal disks (called ECG electrodes) to your chest. The electrodes attach to a machine that monitors your heart rhythm during your test. This machine is called an electrocardiogram.



Next, a thick gel will be placed on your chest. This may feel cold, but it is not painful and it will not harm your skin. The sonographer will then place a transducer (a handheld wand) on the left side of your chest, over your heart. The transducer sends and receives sound waves from your heart. The sound waves are not audible to the human ear. Your sonographer will move the transducer across your chest as they take the ultrasound images, applying firm pressure as they go. They may ask you to briefly hold your breath a few times.

## How should I prepare?

You do not need to do anything in particular to prepare for an echocardiogram. However, please wear a shirt or blouse to the test, as you will need to undress to the waist. Females will be provided with a gown for privacy. **You do not need to fast for an echocardiogram test.**

### Please do not wear:

- Talc
- Body lotion
- Neck chains

## What happens after the test?

The image will be reviewed by a cardiologist before the results are sent to your doctor.

## For more information:

[genescare.com/echo](https://www.genescare.com/echo)

