

## About Transthoracic Echocardiogram

An echocardiogram (also called cardiac ultrasound) is an ultrasound scan of the heart, which involves you lying on a bed while the sonographer takes moving and still images of your heart. High frequency sound waves are sent through the probe on your chest to show a real-time image of your heart on a screen. It gives the Cardiologist information about your heart and valve function while at rest.

## Preparation

1. Wear comfortable loose-fitting clothes that can be easily removed from the chest area. (A top with shorts, pants or skirts would be best, rather than a dress).
2. You can bring a chaperone if needed.
3. Take your medications as usual on the day of the test.
4. You don't need to fast before this test.
5. Bring a list of your medications with you.

## What to expect

You will need to remove the clothing from your chest, but you will be covered as needed. You will then lie down on a bed and ECG electrodes will be placed on your chest. You will lie on your left side most of the time during the scan.

Ultrasound gel is used to improve contact and imaging quality, so your chest will get wet from the gel. The hard ultrasound probe will be put firmly against your chest wall to take the pictures. Several sites are used: the left side of the chest beside the sternum (breastbone), the area under the left breast, the upper stomach and the base of the neck. You may hear noises that sound a bit like a washing machine. This represents the magnified ultrasound signal of blood flowing through the heart chambers and valves. This is completely normal. The scanning time will be about 40 minutes but can vary depending on the findings.

## Results

The Sonographer and the Cardiologist will write a report and send it to your referring Doctor. You should be able to talk with your Doctor about your results and discuss your next steps.

## Important Information

If you have any questions about the test, please contact Cardiology Outpatients.

Office hours: 8:30am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday: (02) 5124 2371

If your call isn't answered, please leave a message with your contact details, and ask for someone to call you back.

This test is bulk billed so you will not have to pay anything if you are eligible for Medicare. Please bring your Medicare or DVA card with you if you have one. There is a waiting list for this test, if you cannot make it to your appointment or you've had it performed somewhere else, please call us as soon as possible.

On the day of your Echocardiogram, please leave plenty of time for parking. The test usually takes an hour to complete.

## Location:

Canberra Hospital, Yamba Drive, Garran ACT 2605

Cardiology Outpatients, Building 1, Level 3

### Acknowledgement of Country



Canberra Health Services acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Ngunnawal people. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and contribution to the life of this city and region.



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Accessibility

Call (02) 5124 0000



Call 131 450

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