



What is an Echocardiogram?

An Echocardiogram is a specialised ultrasound examination of the heart.

How do Echocardiograms work?

Ultrasound uses sound waves to create images. It assesses the structure and function of the heart muscle and valves. An Echocardiogram provides your doctor with valuable information about the function of your heart, whether the valves are leaking or fail to open normally and/or whether there are any structural abnormalities, blood clots or masses.

Who does my Echocardiogram and report?

The person who operates the scanning equipment is a Sonographer. Our Sonographers are university-trained in Echocardiography and accredited with the Australian Sonographer Accreditation Registry (ASAR). The person who views and interprets the films is a doctor specialising in Radiology, known as a Radiologist. The Radiologist prepares a report for your Health Care Professional.

What should I expect when I have my Echocardiogram?

At the clinic you will be taken to a change room where you will be requested to remove your clothing from the waist up and put on an examination gown provided. We will also ask for your weight and height. Electrocardiogram (ECG) leads will be attached to your chest to record your heart. An ultrasound transducer (probe) with a small amount of gel is applied to your chest to take the pictures. This is not painful. You may be asked to hold your breath or change positions during the examination. Occasionally you may hear the Doppler ultrasound as it takes recordings of flow through the heart and blood vessels.

Are there any risks or side effects from my Echocardiogram?

No. Echocardiography is a safe procedure using ultrasound waves. No radiation is used.

How do I prepare for my Echocardiogram?

When you phone to arrange your appointment one of our friendly staff will advise you of the preparation and requirements for this scan.

Things to bring along to my appointment:

- Previous films for area of clinical interest.
- Medicare or Department of Veteran Affairs card (as we bulk bill all eligible Medicare services).
- Referral (this is a legal requirement).
- Details of your weight and height.

[Last Updated: 17/08/2010]