



Patient Information Sheet

Echocardiogram

What is an echocardiogram?

An echocardiogram or echo uses sound waves to create images of the heart valves and heart muscle. An instrument that transmits high-frequency sound waves called a transducer is placed on your chest & ribs in various locations and directed toward the heart. The transducer receives the echoes of the sound waves and transmits them as electrical impulses. The echo machine converts these impulses into moving pictures of the heart. An echo provides information about heart chamber size, wall motion, valve movement, and structural changes in and around the heart. There is no special preparation for the test. During the echo you will lie down on a bed or exam table. A gel will be applied on your chest and the transducer will be positioned on your chest by a technologist and images of your heart will be recorded. You will feel a slight pressure from the transducer as the technologist records the images. A cardiologist will review the recorded images the same day. A report of your echo will be faxed or mailed to your physician, usually within 1 workday.