Cardiology Department
Emergency Care & Medical Services

NHS
Greater Glasgow and Clyde

Information for Patients

Information about an Echocardiogram (ECHO)

NHS
Greater Glasgow and Clyde



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What is an Echocardiogram?

An Echocardiogram is an ultrasound scan of your heart. It is a very straightforward procedure with no side effects.

Why is it done?

The Echocardiogram allows your moving heart to be seen. Imaging the heart allows the cardiac physiologist/doctor to gain important information about:

- The size of your heart
- How well your heart muscle is working
- How well your heart valves are working

How is it done?

You will be given a gown and asked to undress from the waist up.

- You will be asked to lie on a couch
- Electrodes (wires with pads) are placed on your chest so that your heart beat can be monitored.
- A transducer (probe) with cold gel on it is moved over your chest to allow the cardiac physiologist to get a set of images
- You will be asked to lie on your left side with your left arm raised under your head. Raising your left arm stretches apart your ribs and gives a better image.

The room will be darkened to allow the images to be seen.

There will be some noise from the machine which is normal.

The Echocardiogram takes around 20-30 minutes.

The cardiac physiologist or doctor will answer any doubts or queries you may have about the test. The results will be sent to the doctor who asked for the test and they will decide if any further treatment is needed.

