Information for Patients about

NHS
Greater Glasgow and Clyde

An Electrocardiogram (ECG)

Cardiac Physiology (ECG) Department

Glasgow Royal Infirmary and New Stobill Hospital

What is an Electrocardiogram (ECG)?

An Electrocardiogram (ECG) is a recording of your heart rate and rhythm. It is the most common test carried out to help your doctor decide if there is a possible heart problem and, if so, how to treat it. It is a simple test that will cause you no pain and has no side effects. This test will only take about 10 minutes.

Why do I need an ECG?

ECGs are carried out for many reasons. Your doctor may have already discussed with you why you need it. Below are some reasons for having an ECG (this is not a full list)

- To help find out what is causing you to have chest pain or palpitations
- To learn more about your heart rhythm
- If your blood pressure is higher than normal

What does it involve?

Before you come for the ECG, please do not use body cream, lotion, or talc.

The physiologist will ask you to undress from the waist up and will give you a hospital gown.

They will ask you to lie down on the bed.

- Your skin will be gently cleaned with a special pad to help the electrodes (wires with pads) stick and work properly.

We will place the electrodes on your chest, wrists, and ankles, to record your heart's activity from different areas.

How does it work?

Your heart beats by sending electrical signals through the heart and body. These signals reach the skin, where we can detect them using an ECG machine and record them on paper.

Results

The results will be sent to the doctor who asked for the test. If you have any questions about the test, please ask the physiologist who will be happy to help you.

Contact Details:

If you have any questions, please contact the Department:

Glasgow Royal Infirmary: **☎ 0141 211 8430**

New Stobhill Hospital: **☎ 0141 355 1225**