



PATIENT INFORMATION

ECHOCARDIOGRAM



Patient Information Factsheet – Echocardiogram

Before my Appointment

****Please be aware that you are likely to experience delays when trying to park your car at the hospital – therefore please aim to arrive at the hospital 30 mins before your appointment time to avoid being late for your scan. If you are more than 10 mins late for your appointment your scan may be cancelled and rescheduled for another date****

This leaflet has been written to provide information about a test that allows a Physiologist (a specially trained technician) to examine your heart using ultrasound waves (Echocardiogram). We hope it answers some of your questions or concerns you may have about the test. It is not intended to replace talking with medical, nursing or technical staff.

What is an Echocardiogram?

An echocardiogram or 'echo' is a scan that uses ultrasound to produce pictures of your heart to examine its contraction and see how your valves function.

Are there any risks involved?

The scan doesn't have any side effects and doesn't use radioactivity.

How is my scan performed?

The scan may take up to 40 minutes. You will be asked to undress to the waist & you'll be provided with a hospital gown to wear. You'll need to lie on a couch where an ultrasound probe covered by a small amount of gel is placed on the centre of your chest.

Will I experience any pain or discomfort during the scan?

You may experience some discomfort during the scan as a degree of pressure may be applied by the operator to obtain the best images possible.

Who will perform my scan?

Your echo will be carried out by either a male or female cardiac physiologist or cardiac doctor.

Can I bring a companion?

You may bring a friend or family member with you to stay with you during the scan. If this is not possible, or there are other personal issues that we should consider, please ask to discuss these in confidence on arrival. Every effort will be made to accommodate your needs.

Can I have a chaperone?

If during the scan you require a chaperone please inform a member of staff on arrival or the physiologist who is performing the scan and we will provide a chaperone for you. Alternatively, you can bring someone to the scan to act a chaperone for you.

After my appointment

Once the scan is completed you can get dressed and leave. You can drive to and from your appointment.

What happens to my scan report?

A Specialist Cardiac Physiologist or cardiac doctor will examine your ultrasound pictures and write a report which will be sent to the doctor who requested the scan. The operator cannot give you any results during or after the procedure.

If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that you may need to leave a voicemail message, but we aim to return your call within one working day.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.