

ECHOCARDIOGRAM TEST (ECHO) INFORMATION SHEET

What is an Echocardiogram and why do I need one?

An echocardiogram, also known as 'Echo', is an ultrasound scan of the heart and gives good information about the structure and function of the heart. It is a similar sort of scan to the ultrasound used in pregnancy and has become one of the most widely used cardiac imaging tests. It can be a useful test if you have recently had a heart attack or if you have heart failure. (**'It is often used to confirm normality of the hearts anatomy' or 'It is also used routinely to assess people with murmurs, heart valve problems or congenital heart disease'**).

How is the Echocardiogram performed?

- **You will need to undress to the waist and lie on the couch. You may have to turn on your left side during the test so that the operator can scan the heart from different angles.**
- A probe is placed on your chest. The operator moves the probe around over the skin surface to get different views. Also, lubricating jelly is put on your chest so the probe makes good contact with the skin.
- A pulse of high frequency sound is then passed through the skin. The probe picks up the echoes reflected from various parts of the heart and shows them as an echocardiogram - a detailed picture on the screen. The test can also measure variations in blood flow in different parts of the heart.
- The test takes about 20 minutes.

Do I need to prepare for this test?

You do not need any special preparation before this test. You can eat and drink normally before and after the test. Continue to take your usual medication.

Is an Echocardiogram a safe test?

Echocardiogram is extremely safe. There are no known risks from the clinical use of ultrasound during this type of testing.

The 66 Harley Street Investigation team will be happy to help with any concerns on the following number **02074364568**