

ELECTROCARDIOGRAM (ECG) TEST INFORMATION SHEET

What is an ECG test?

An electrocardiogram (ECG) test records the electrical activity of the heart and is commonly used to detect abnormal heart rhythms and to investigate the cause of chest pains.

How is the ECG test performed?

Small metal electrodes are stuck on to your arms, legs and chest. Wires from the electrodes are connected to the ECG machine. The machine detects and amplifies the electrical impulses that occur at each heartbeat and records them on to a paper or computer. A few heartbeats are recorded from different sets of electrodes. The test takes about five minutes to do.

What does an Electrocardiogram show?

- Abnormal heart rhythms. If the heart rate is very fast, very slow, or irregular, this finding can be measured. There are various types of irregular heart rhythm with characteristic ECG patterns.
- Previous heart attack (myocardial infarction), whether recent or old in the past. A heart attack causes damage to heart muscle which heals with scar tissue, showing on positive ECG. These can be detected by abnormal ECG patterns.
- An enlarged heart. Basically, this causes bigger impulses than normal.

Do I need to prepare for this test?

You do not need any special preparation before this test.

Is the ECG test a safe test?

The ECG test is painless and harmless. (The ECG machine records electrical impulses coming from your body - it does not put any electricity into your body.)

If you have any concerns about the level of yours symptoms or any change between seeing the doctor who has ordered the test and, the scheduled test booked at 66 Harley Street please inform the technicians and the attending doctor.

The ECG test team will be happy to help with any concerns on the following number **020 7436 4568**.

The personnel involved in the test are as follows: