



This handout will help you get ready for your echocardiogram.

What is an echocardiogram?

An echocardiogram (echo) is a test that uses sound waves to create pictures or video of the inside of the heart as it beats. During the test, electrodes are placed on your chest to show the heart rhythm. Next, a hand-held ultrasound probe covered with gel is placed on your chest and pictures are taken.

Why is an echocardiogram done?

An echocardiogram may be done to check the function of the heart muscle, check heart valves for leaking and narrowing and look for possible causes of stroke.

Types of Echocardiograms	Exam time	Preparation
<input type="checkbox"/> Transthoracic echocardiogram (TTE) This is the most common type. Views of the heart are obtained by moving the probe to different locations on your chest or abdominal wall.	30-45 minutes	Take your usual medications unless your doctor tells you not to.
<input type="checkbox"/> Stress echocardiogram. During this test, an echocardiogram is done both before and after you exercise or by injecting a medication that makes your heart beat harder and faster.	30-45 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not take beta blockers and calcium channel blockers medications on the day before and on the day of the procedure, unless instructed otherwise by your physician. • Do not eat or drink for 2 hours before the test. • Wear comfortable clothing, including loose fitting underwear, and good walking shoes.

Who will do the test?

The test will be done by a Cardiac Ultrasound Technologist (Cardiac Sonographer). A cardiologist/specialist (heart doctor) will look at your pictures and write a report. Your family doctor will be sent the report in 7-10 days.

Where will my echocardiogram be done?

Echos are done at the following locations. Your doctor will tell you when and where your appointment is. Check-in **15 minutes before** your appointment time. Make sure to allow extra time for parking.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Royal Jubilee Hospital
Echocardiography Department
3rd Floor, D&T Building
1952 Bay St., Victoria, BC | <input type="checkbox"/> Victoria General Hospital
Echocardiography Department
Main Floor
1 Hospital Way, Victoria, BC |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nanaimo Regional General Hospital
Medical Imaging Department
1200 Dufferin Crescent, Nanaimo, BC | <input type="checkbox"/> St. Joseph's General Hospital
Medical Imaging Department
2137 Comox Ave., Comox, BC |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Campbell River & District Hospital
Medical Imaging Department
375 2 nd Ave., Campbell River, BC | <input type="checkbox"/> Cowichan District Hospital
Echocardiography Department
Main Entrance
3045 Gibbins Rd, Duncan BC |

For non-emergency health information and services:

HealthLinkBC - Health advice you can trust 24/7.

Tel: 8.1.1 from anywhere in BC.

Tel: 7.1.1 for deaf and hearing-impaired assistance (TTY)

Web: www.HealthLinkBC.ca

The information in this handout is intended only for the person it was given to by the health care team. It does not replace the advice or directions given to you by your doctor.