

What is an Echo test?

An echocardiogram is a noninvasive procedure used to assess the heart's function and structures. During the procedure, a transducer sends out ultrasonic sound waves at a frequency too high to be heard. The waves echo off of the heart structures. The transducer picks up the reflected waves and sends them to a computer. The computer interprets the echoes into an image of the heart walls and valves

Pre-Registration and Testing Location

Plan to arrive 20 minutes before the scheduled time of your test with your medications. Bring your hospital and insurance cards with you as well. Check in at the front desk in the main lobby. Echocardiograms are performed at:

Minimally Invasive Surgery Hospital (MISH)
11217 Lakeview Ave., Lenexa, Kansas 66219
913-322-7408

Kansas Institute of Medicine (KIM)
1610 Washington Blvd, KC, KS 66102
913-281-2605

Before Your Echo Test

- Your physician may instruct you to stop or taper certain medications (heart and lung meds usually) before your echo test. Please check with your physician if any medications should be stopped before this test.
- Generally, no prior preparation, such as fasting or sedation, is required
- Notify your physician if you have a pacemaker.
- If you are pregnant or suspect that you may be pregnant, you should notify your physician before the test.
- Women should wear a separate top, preferably that fastens in the front for ease of attaching the ECG electrodes to the chest.
- Please be aware, the areas where the electrodes will need to be placed may be shaved.
- You may wear your glasses, dentures, or hearing aids if you use any of these.
- For some patients, having to lie still on the examination table for the length of the procedure may cause some discomfort or pain. Be sure to discuss any concerns with the technician or doctor prior to the procedure.

During The Procedure

- You will be asked to remove any jewelry or other objects that may interfere with the procedure.
- You will be asked to open your blouse or shirt in the front (men may be asked to remove their shirts), or you may be asked to wear a hospital gown.
- If your chest, arms, or legs are very hairy, the technician may shave small patches of hairs needed so that the electrodes will stick to skin. Electrodes will then be attached to your chest, arms, and legs.
- A blood pressure cuff will be attached to your arm while you are sitting down. Initial, or baseline, ECG and blood pressure readings will be taken while you are lying or sitting down and standing up.
- You will lie on a table or bed, positioned on your left side. A pillow or wedge may be placed behind your back for support.
- You will be connected to an ECG monitor that records the electrical activity of the heart and monitors the heart during the procedure using small, adhesive electrodes. The ECG tracings that record the electrical activity of the heart will be compared to the images displayed on the echocardiogram monitor.
- The room will be darkened so that the images on the echo monitor can be viewed by the technologist.
- The technologist will place warmed gel on your chest and then place the transducer probe on the gel. You will feel a slight pressure as the technologist positions the transducer to get the desired image of your heart.
- During the test, the technologist will move the transducer probe around and apply varying amounts of pressure to obtain images of different locations and structures of your heart. The amount of pressure behind the probe should not be uncomfortable. If it does make you uncomfortable, however, let the technologist know.
- After the procedure has been completed, the technologist will wipe the gel from your chest and remove the ECG electrode pads. You may then put on your clothes.

After the Procedure

- You should be able to resume your normal diet and activities, unless your physician instructs you differently.
- Generally, there is no special care following an echo
- Notify your physician if you develop any signs or symptoms you had prior to the test (e.g., chest pain, shortness of breath, dizziness, or fainting).