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ECHOCARDIOGRAPHY

What is it?

An echocardiogram is a procedure that uses sound waves to give a picture of your heart and how it is functioning. The Doctor may order this when you have chest pain, palpitations, a heart murmur, syncope (passing out), dizziness or other cardiac symptoms. It is used to diagnose Congestive Heart Failure (CHF), valve problems, congenital anomalies, and damage that has been done to the heart.

How do I prepare for it?

There is no preparation needed for this test. It is a non-invasive test. However, it is recommended to wear a loose shirt or button up shirt so the technician can access your chest easily.

What will I experience during the procedure?

The echo technician will apply a warmed gel on your chest before pressing a transducer to your chest wall. There is no pain associated with an echocardiogram. Sound waves are emitted from the transducer which are then recorded as they bounce off structures in your heart. A computer converts the sound waves into pictures of the moving heart. The entire test usually lasts around 30 to 45 minutes.