

Transthoracic Echocardiogram (TTE)



Interior Health
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Patient Information

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What is a Transthoracic Echocardiogram?

A transthoracic echocardiogram, also known as an echo, is a procedure that uses sound waves (ultrasound) to take pictures of your heart. A TTE is done by placing a camera and a small amount of ultrasound gel to your chest, stomach and neck. The pictures show the shape, texture and movement of your heart valves, as well as the size of your heart chambers and how well your heart muscle is working.

Why did my doctor order a TTE?

A TTE is ordered to assess overall structure and function of your heart. The purpose of this test is to:

- Check the size and shape of your heart
- Check the valves in your heart
- Check your heart function after a heart attack
- Detect heart tumours
- Detect any fluid leaking into the sac surrounding the heart

How long will the procedure take?

- The procedure takes approximately 45 to 60 minutes.

Preparation for the procedure

- There is no preparation required for this test.

What is an echo contrast study?

An echo contrast study is performed during a TTE to outline the heart chambers and provide the physician with detailed pictures of your heart. The echo contrast agent will be administered through an intravenous (IV) placed in your arm. The IV will be removed when the procedure is done.

Please self monitor for adverse reactions for 30 minutes following the echo contrast study. The most common adverse reactions to echo contrast include back pain, headache, flushing, nausea, chest pain and dizziness.

What is a bubble study?

- A bubble study is performed during a TTE to assess blood flow within the heart. The 'bubble' agent (agitated saline) will be administered through an intravenous (IV) placed in your arm. The IV will be removed when the procedure is done.

Healthlink BC	Nurse	24 hours a day	Daily	<i>Call 8-1-1 to speak with a nurse, ask a dietitian about nutrition, or a pharmacist about your medication.</i>
Call 8-1-1	Dietitian	9 am–5 pm	Mon–Fri	
	Pharmacist	5 pm–9 am	Daily	
	Hearing Impaired	Call 7-1-1		
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