



Cardio-Respiratory Department
Colchester Hospital
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**East Suffolk and
North Essex**
NHS Foundation Trust

Having an echocardiogram

This leaflet is designed to provide you with information about your echocardiogram (ultrasound scan of the heart). It is important that you read the following instructions and the information given.

What is an echocardiogram and what are the benefits?

- It is a scan of the heart using ultrasound (sound waves, not X-rays).
- It takes images of the heart, which can show any heart defects or physical problems.

Why am I having it?

It is a test that helps the doctor to have a clearer picture of any heart defects and function.

Do I need any preparation?

- Please wear loose fitting clothes and avoid wearing heavy jewellery.
- You do not need to stop any medication.
- You may drive a car after the test.

Are there any risks?

This is a very safe test. There are no known risks.

What happens?

Your scan will take place in a private room in the Outpatient Department. (Your letter tells you which hospital to attend.)

- A specially trained technician (echocardiographer) will carry out the scan. We do have male echocardiographers so if you feel you need a chaperone, please let us know.
- You will be asked to remove your clothes down to your waist and women will be given a gown.
- You will be asked to lie on your left side with your left arm above your head, so that the ultrasound waves can transmit a clear picture of the heart.
- The echocardiographer will cover the area to be scanned with gel.
- He or she will slide a small metal probe over the gel. This will transmit an image on to the screen.
- The scan takes about 20 – 40 minutes and is not painful or uncomfortable.
- Please feel free to ask any questions that you have about the scan.



Your photographic records

As part of your treatment, a photographic record may be made, such as X-ray(s), clinical photographs or digital images, which will be kept confidentially in your health records and seen only by people involved in your care or quality checking. They are also extremely important for teaching or medical research so we may ask for your written consent to use your images, in which case your personal details will be removed so you cannot be identified.

After the scan

You can get dressed again and leave when you are ready.

Results

The results of your echocardiogram will be sent to the doctor who requested the scan.

Verifying your identity

When you attend hospital you will be asked to confirm your first and last names, date of birth, postcode and NHS number, if you know it, and to let us know if you have any allergies.

Your experience matters

We value your feedback. Please help us improve our services by answering a simple question, in our online survey – “Overall, how was your experience of our services?”

This survey is known as “The Friends and Family Test”.

You can either scan this QR code with a smart phone camera:



Or type the following web address into your browser:

www.esneft.nhs.uk/get-involved/your-views-matter/friends-and-family-test/

Thank you very much.

Please ask if you need this leaflet in an alternative format.

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www.esneft.nhs.uk