



Echocardiogram

An echocardiogram is an ultrasound movie of the inside of the heart. It can detect nearly every congenital heart defect or any problem of the heart muscle function.

The test is often performed by a specialized technician called a sonographer, or by a physician. The test requires placing a few stickers (like those used for the ECG) on your chest. The sonographer will use a special ultrasound device (called a probe) and place a small amount of gel on the end of it. The probe is then placed on the front of your chest, upper abdomen and the root of the neck. Various pictures of the heart are recorded from these viewing points. The sonographer will make many adjustments in the ultrasound machine during the study to get the clearest pictures possible. The sonographer may ask that you turn on your left or right side or extend your neck backward for portions of the study. An echocardiogram usually takes 40–60 minutes to perform.