

## **ECHOCARDIOGRAM ULTRASOUND**

**OVERVIEW:** An echocardiogram is ultrasound of the heart. It assesses the anatomic structure and overall function of the heart. Blood flow through heart valves is assessed as heart valves can malfunction causing blood to leak backwards. Valves that are damaged can become narrow which causes a problem with blood flowing out to the rest of the body and to the lungs. Tumors or infections of the heart are visualized with this exam. The muscle of the heart and its “squeeze” are evaluated. Fluid buildup around the heart is also assessed. Congenital defects of the heart can also be detected and these developmental defects sometimes present much later in life.

**PREPARATION:** In general, no specific preparation is required for this test. The patient may go about their activities as usual, unless instructed differently by their physician. Patients will be asked to remove all clothing above the waist for this test and should make their wardrobe choice accordingly. It is also recommended that the patient refrain from applying lotions, oils, or powder to the skin of their chest because these substances can interfere with the gel that is applied during ultrasound testing.

Most common indications for scan are:

- Chest pain/discomfort
- Palpitations
- Murmur
- Hypertension
- Abnormal EKG (electrocardiogram)
- Tachycardia/Bradycardia
- CAD (coronary artery disease)
- Shortness of Breath
- Pre-Syncope/Syncope
- Pulmonary Hypertension
- TIA/CVA (Transient Ischemic Attack, Cerebrovascular Accident)

The reason for this test will depend on your symptoms.

**THIS ULTRASOUND WILL TAKE ABOUT 40-50 MINUTES AND THE REPORT WILL BE BACK TO YOUR ORDERING PHYSICIAN WITHIN 24-48 HOURS**