



### **What is an Echocardiogram?**

An Echocardiogram, or Echo, is an ultrasound image of the heart. A jelly-like substance is put on a probe which is placed over the chest area. The probe produces high frequency sound waves that bounce off solid objects (the heart and blood vessels), creating echoes that appear as moving images showing how well the heart is working. There are no known side effects.

### **Why is an Echocardiogram done?**

An Echo test gives doctors information about the heart, such as:

- The size of the heart chambers
- The thickness of the heart walls
- The pumping strength of the heart
- The shape/motion of heart valves – to find leaking/abnormal thickness
- Detecting fluid on or around the heart
- Detecting abnormal holes in the heart chambers
- Detecting blood clots or tumors in the heart.

### **What can I expect during the Echocardiogram?**

The technician will ask you to remove your clothes from the waist up (women will wear a gown). A clear gel will be placed on your chest and the technician will scan your heart with a transducer (a microphone-like device) that will show a moving picture of your heart.

### **When will I know the results of my test?**

Your cardiologist will review the findings of the Echocardiogram with you on your next office visit. Make sure that you have a follow-up appointment scheduled as the results of this test cannot be given over the telephone.

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