

Transoesophageal Echocardiogram – A Guide to the Test

**Cardiology Department
Medicine**

**This leaflet has been designed to
give you important information
about your condition / procedure,
and to answer some common
queries that you may have.**

Information for patients and visitors

Introduction

This leaflet has been compiled to help you understand the test you are having and to give you some general information about what to expect during your stay.

Please ensure you read this leaflet carefully.

What is a transoesophageal echocardiogram?

A transoesophageal echocardiogram is a detailed ultrasound examination performed by scanning the heart from within the oesophagus (the food pipe connecting your mouth and stomach).

You will have local anaesthetic sprayed on the back of your throat and then asked to lie on your left side for the procedure. Your heart rate and blood pressure will be monitored throughout.

You will be asked to swallow a thin ultrasound probe to enable the test to be completed.

A sedative will be given by an injection to enable the test to be performed comfortably. This sedative will make you feel sleepy for a short while after the procedure.

Requests for Tests / Investigations Prior to your Admission

Please find enclosed TWO forms, one for an ECG (green card) and one for a blood test.

These tests must be done at the hospital before 1pm on the day prior to your admission OR at your pre-assessment appointment.

Please bring the forms to the hospital with you and take them to the relevant departments to be carried out. The ECG should be done in the Cardiology and the blood test in Pathology, if you do not have a pre-assessment appointment.

It is essential that you have these tests done before the day of admission otherwise your procedure maybe cancelled.

Form / Information

Please complete the enclosed admission form and bring it into hospital on the day of admission.

Visitors

Unfortunately we do not allow visitors to stay due to patient privacy. We do ask that you organise a friend / relative to bring you into hospital and take you home.

Information for patients and visitors

Prior to Admission

If your procedure is in the morning please do not eat or drink after midnight. If you have an afternoon procedure you may have a light breakfast of either cereal or toast on the day of admission but nothing to eat or drink after 7.00 am.

You will be in the unit for approximately 3 hours.

If you have any loose teeth, caps or crowns or any swallowing difficulties please contact us prior to the appointment.

Please bring a list of your medication with you. If you take any of the following medications please follow the instructions below.

Warfarin

This does not need to be stopped prior to your procedure and should be continued. Please bring your anticoagulation record book with you.

Other blood-thinners called novel anti-coagulants are:

(Pradaxa - Dabigatran Etexilate, Eliquis - Apixaban and Xarelto - Rivaroxaban).

These medications should not be stopped for the procedure.

Asprin and Clopidogrel (Plavix)

These should not be stopped.

Diuretics (Water tablets)

Please do not take these on the day of the test.

Diabetic Medication:

- **Tablet controlled**

Do not take diabetic tablets on the morning of the procedure.

- **Insulin Dependent**

Fast acting insulin - have half your normal dose on the morning of your procedure.

Slow release insulin - do not take on the morning of the procedure.

Please bring your insulin into the hospital with you.

Benefits

A transoesophageal echocardiogram can provide more detailed images of the heart valves and structure of the heart to enable the Cardiologist to decide the best treatment for you.

Information for patients and visitors

Risks

Risks from transoesophageal echocardiography are very small and can include sore throat and damage to teeth (hence the use of a mouth guard). Serious risks are very rare and include:

- Oesophageal perforation – extremely rare, less than 0.01% (1 in every 10,000 patients)
- Bleeding – 0.2% (2 patients in every 1000)
- Bronchospasm/hypoxia (difficulty in breathing) – 0.8% (8 patients in every 1000)

The figures quoted above are average figures for all cases. Your doctor will discuss with you any specific risks that may relate to you.

If you have a 'contrast study', there is a slight risk of bruising around the site of the injection

Alternatives

Please discuss alternative options with your Cardiologist.

Important Following the Examination

Due to the effects of the sedation it is vital that you are escorted to and from the unit. Please note that your escort **MUST** return to the unit before discharge. If this is not possible please contact us.

You **MUST NOT** drive a vehicle, operate machinery, drink alcohol, sign any legal binding documents or return to work for at least 24 hours.

You **MUST NOT** walk home or travel on public transport such as a bus or train for 24 hours following the examination.

It is necessary that during your first night at home a friend or relative stays with you. It is important that you rest completely for the rest of the day.

If you do not have a friend or relative that can stay with you overnight your procedure may have to be cancelled or you will have to stay overnight in hospital providing there is a bed available.

You may eat and drink as usual – any difficulties in swallowing, please contact your GP for advice.

After the test the Consultant will inform you of the results. This will be after you have recovered from the sedation.

Information for patients and visitors

Reference Section

Should you require further information regarding heart investigations you may find the following websites useful.

The British Cardiac Society

www.bcs.com

The British Heart Foundation

www.bhf.org.uk

The British Society of Echocardiography

www.bsecho.org

Contact Details for Further Information

If you have any queries regarding any of the information contained within this leaflet, or your admission date and time please contact the Cardiology Department at:

Diana, Princess of Wales Hospital, Grimsby on:

03033 306539 (Secretary)

03033 306081 (Cardiology Day Case Unit)

03033 304741 (Coronary Care Unit)

Scunthorpe General Hospital on:

03033 306542 (Secretary)

03033 302327 (Planned Investigations Unit) 03033 302367 (Coronary Care Unit)

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service offers confidential advice, support and information on any health related matters.

If you have a comment, concern, complaint or compliment about the care or service you have received from the Trust you can contact the PALS team as follows:

Telephone: 03033 306518

Email: nlg-tr.PALS@nhs.net

There are also offices at both the Diana Princess of Wales Hospital (near the main entrance) and Scunthorpe General Hospital (on the C Floor, near the outpatient department), should you wish to visit.

Please note: PALS should not be contacted for clinical advice relating to the content of this leaflet. The service should be contacted directly in the first instance.



Information for patients and visitors

Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust

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Grimsby
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