

Transesophageal Echocardiogram

1. What is a Transesophageal Echocardiogram?

Transesophageal Echocardiogram (TEE) is an ultrasound test that gives your doctor images of your heart. By having you swallow a flexible probe, the cardiologist can see the structure of your heart without having the skin, rib cage and muscle of the chest interfere with the pictures. During the TEE, sound waves bounce (echo) off your heart. These sound waves create images of your heart on a video screen. The images help your doctor identify problems such as heart infection or disease, or problems with your heart's walls or valves.

2. What to expect when I arrive?

- You will check in at the Heart Center and be asked to fill out paperwork.
- The nurse will take you to the prep area to review your health history and answer your questions.
- You should plan to be in the Heart Center for at least two hours.
- You'll be asked to sign a consent form for the procedure.
- You will change into a gown, and be connected to equipment that will monitor your heart rate, blood pressure and oxygen level.
- An IV will be started to allow us to give you fluids and medications for sedation to help you relax.

3. What happens during the procedure?

- If you wear dentures, you will be asked to remove them. Your throat will be sprayed with an anesthetic. You will also be given oxygen through a nasal cannula.
- You will lie on your left side. A sedative will be given through your IV to help you relax. The probe is gently inserted into your mouth and guided into your esophagus (throat or food tube) by your doctor. The probe will be lubricated to make it slide easily. You may feel the doctor moving the probe, but it shouldn't be painful.
- The actual procedure lasts 10-15 minutes. The remainder of the time is spent in preparation and recovery.

4. What happens after the procedure?

- After the procedure you will be monitored for about one to two hours.
- You should not eat or drink for at least two hours because your throat will still be numb.
- The nurse will provide discharge instructions before you leave.

5. Call your doctor if you experience:

- Sore throat or trouble swallowing that lasts more than 24 hours.
- Bleeding, persistent pain or fever.

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6. Special considerations before your procedure:

- You will need to have someone available to drive you home.
- Do not eat or drink eight hours before your procedure.
- Your doctor may instruct you to take your usual morning medications with a small sip of water. If you have diabetes and take insulin check with your doctor.
- If you have an artificial heart valve, be sure to tell your doctor, as you will need to receive a dose of IV antibiotics before the procedure.
- Bring all of your medications with you in their original container. This includes over-the-counter and herbal medicines.
- Do not drive for 24 hours after your procedure.
- Wear comfortable clothes.



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