

A TEE uses high-frequency sound waves to look at the structures of the heart.

Transesophageal Echocardiography (TEE)

A transesophageal echocardiogram (TEE) is a test that uses ultrasound (high-frequency sound waves) to look at the structures of the heart. Pictures are taken from a probe inserted into the esophagus, (the tube that carries food from the mouth to the stomach.) Since the probe sits directly behind the heart, it allows certain parts of the heart to be seen more clearly than with a transthoracic echocardiogram done outside the chest.

Before the Test

A TEE takes about 1 hour to do and about 60 minutes for recovery.

- If you are taking Coumadin®, you will need an INR blood test drawn 1 to 3 days before the TEE. Your primary doctor can order this. Results must be available before the test.
- Do not eat or drink anything for 6 hours before the test.
- However, you may take your usual medications the day of the test with a sip of water.
- On the day of the test, please arrive 30 minutes before your appointment time.

If you are having a cardiac ablation or cardioversion the same day as your TEE, you will need to arrive **90 minutes** before your TEE.

Go to the 8th floor reception desk in the Galter Pavilion, 201 East Huron Street.

Parking is available for patients and visitors in the garage at 222 East Huron Street, across from the Feinberg and Galter pavilions. For discounted rates, please bring your parking ticket with you. Tickets can be validated at the Customer Services Desks on the 1st and 2nd floor of the Feinberg and Galter pavilions or the 1st floor of Prentice (including the Prentice 24-hour desk near the Superior Street entrance).

- Dentures and partials must be removed for this test. Tell your doctor if you have any loose teeth.

Be sure to bring:

- Your doctor's written order for the test if one was given to you
- A list of allergies
- A list of all your current medications (prescription, over-the-counter, and herbals)
- Photo ID
- Medical insurance information
- Medicare card (Medicare patients only)

A responsible adult **must** accompany you out of the recovery area to take you home. You will **not** be able to drive until the next day.

During the Test

- You will be asked to remove any dentures.
- To monitor you during the test, these will be applied:
 - EKG electrodes to monitor your heart rhythm.
 - Blood pressure cuff.
 - A finger clip (pulse oximeter) to monitor your oxygen level.
- A numbing medicine is applied to the back of your throat to reduce any discomfort.
- A bite block will be placed in your mouth to protect your teeth.
- An IV will be placed in your hand or arm. You will receive a mild sedative through the IV that relaxes you before the probe is placed.
- During the test, you will be asked to lie on your left side.
- The doctor will insert a thin, lubricated probe into your mouth and down your esophagus. Pictures of the heart are then taken.
- After all the pictures are taken, the probe is removed.

After the Test

You will be watched for at least 60 minutes after the test or until the sedative wears off. You will not be able to eat or drink anything for 2 hours after the test. You may have a mild sore throat for a few days after the test.

Important: outpatients—You must bring along a responsible adult to accompany you home after the test.

After the heart doctor has reviewed your test, the results will be put into your electronic medical record. Your doctor will have access to the results and discuss them with you.

If you have any questions, call Echocardiography scheduling at 312.926.7483. The staff will help you with any questions you may have.

Northwestern Medicine—Health Information Resources

For more information, contact Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Alberto Culver Health Learning Center (HLC) at hlc@nm.org, or by calling 312.926.5465. Health information professionals can help you find the information you need and provide you with personal support at no charge.

For more information about Northwestern Medicine, please visit our website at nm.org.

Para asistencia en español, por favor llamar al Departamento de Representantes para Pacientes al 312.926.3112.

The entities that come together as Northwestern Medicine are committed to representing the communities we serve, fostering a culture of inclusion, delivering culturally competent care, providing access to treatment and programs in a nondiscriminatory manner and eliminating healthcare disparities. For questions, please call either Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Patient Representatives Department at 312.926.3112, TDD/TTY 312.926.6363 or the Northwestern Medical Group Patient Representatives Department at 312.695.1100, TDD/TTY 312.926.6363.

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