

Transesophageal Echocardiogram (TEE)

What is a TransEsophageal Echocardiogram (TEE)?

A transesophageal echocardiogram or TEE is a special type of ultrasound that uses sound waves to take pictures of your heart. The pictures are taken from inside the esophagus. This type of ultrasound gives a much clearer picture of the heart than a regular ultrasound.

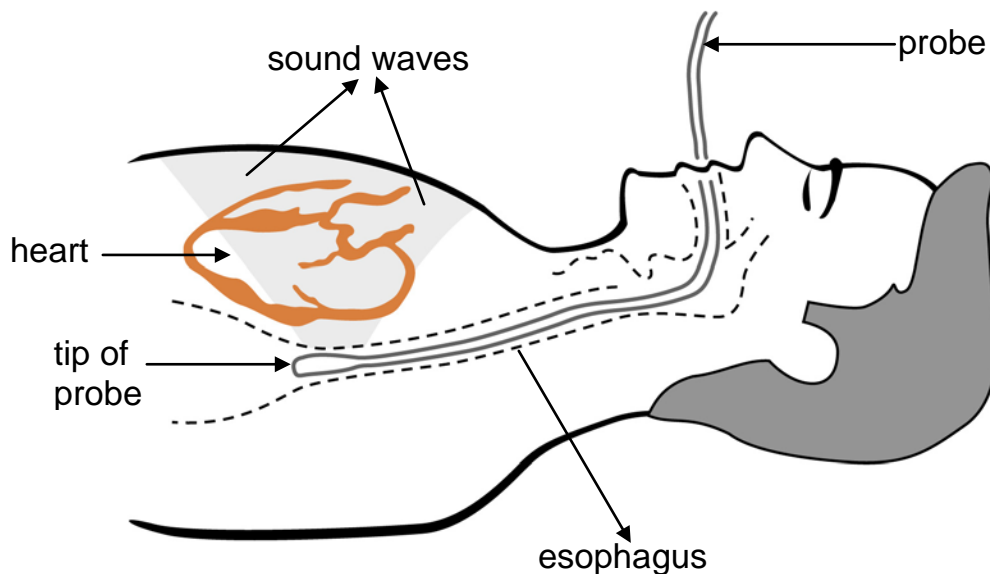
Why do I need a TEE?

A TEE is done by a special doctor, called a cardiologist, to help check your heart's condition related to:

- any congenital or birth defects, heart valve disease or heart muscle disease
 - the function of an artificial valve
 - any blood clots in your heart
 - any infection in your heart
 - possible cardiac causes of stroke
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How is it done?

A thin tube, called a probe, is passed down your throat into your esophagus. At the tip of the probe, sound waves are sent out that will show very detailed pictures of your heart on a monitor.



How safe is a TEE?

It is a safe test, with serious complications reported in only 1 out of 6,000 patients. The test can be done for most patients except those with serious swallowing problems. The doctor will explain the procedure and the risks and ask you to sign a consent form.

How do I prepare for the TEE?

1. If you take blood thinning medication such as warfarin or Coumadin[®]:
 - tell this to the technologist when your appointment is made.
 - bring your most recent INR result with you.
2. Do not eat or drink after midnight before the test. You may take your usual medications the day of the test with a sip of water.

3. If you are taking insulin or oral medications to lower your blood sugar, you need to discuss this medication with your doctor.
4. Tell the doctor if you have any problems swallowing or problems with your mouth, esophagus or stomach before the test.
5. You cannot drive or operate heavy equipment for 24 hours after the test.
Arrange to have someone drive you home after the test.
6. Do not return to work the day of your test. Plan to rest for the remainder of the day.

What happens during the TEE?

You will have an intravenous or IV started. A mild sedative will be injected that will help you relax during the test. Your throat will be sprayed with a local anesthetic to make it "numb" and reduce your gag reflex. The freezing makes it hard to swallow and to tell hot from cold.

When you are relaxed and comfortable, the probe will be placed into your mouth and you will be asked to swallow. Pictures from the ultrasound will show your heart's structure and function, including information about your heart muscle, valves and blood flow.

What happens right after the TEE?

A nurse or technologist will be with you as you recover. Your IV will be removed. Your throat will feel numb for about 1 hour after the test. You may need to stay in recovery until the effects of the sedation have worn off. The test and recovery period will take about 3 to 4 hours.

You will not be able to eat or drink for 1 to 2 hours. You may have a hoarse voice or sore throat. For the next 3 hours, all food and drink must be at room temperature. You can eat normally 4 hours after the TEE.

The views of your heart will be recorded. The doctor who did the TEE will look at the recordings and send a report to your referring doctor.

For 24 hours after your TEE, you cannot:

- drive
- operate machinery
- drink any alcohol
- make major or legal decisions

If you have any questions, please call the phone number listed below where you are having your TEE.

Where do I go for my TEE?

- Hamilton General Hospital** – Enter the main entrance from Barton Street. Turn left at the Information desk. Go down the hall, past the main elevators and turn left at “X-Ray, Nuclear Medicine, Medical Diagnostic Unit”. Turn right and go into the “Medical Diagnostic Unit” reception.
Phone – 905-527-4322 ext. 46491.
- St. Joseph’s Healthcare** – EPS is on Level 1 of the Martha Wing.
Phone – 905-522-1155, ext. 36082

From Charlton Avenue East near John Street: Enter the Martha Wing at street level. You will see the Reception Desk for Electro-Diagnostic Services (EDS) inside this entrance.

From the Visitor Parking Garage off James Street South: Go in the Fontbonne building right beside the parking garage. Follow the signs to the main hospital. You will follow the covered walkway to the hospital crossing over St. Joseph’s Drive. At the end of the walkway take the elevator to Level 0. Turn left when you get off the elevator. Turn left again at the first hallway. This hall goes to EPS in the Martha Wing.

Ask any staff member for help to get to EPS.