

*If you have
any questions,
please ask your
physician or
nurse.*

Transesophageal Echocardiogram

A transesophageal echocardiogram (TEE) is a test that uses ultrasound (high-frequency sound waves) to look at the structures of the heart. Your healthcare team inserts a probe into the esophagus (the tube that carries food from the mouth to the stomach), and it takes pictures. Since the probe sits right behind the heart, it shows certain parts of the heart more clearly compared to a transthoracic echocardiogram, which is done outside the chest.

A TEE takes about 1 hour to do. Then, plan on an additional 1 hour for recovery.

Before the test

If you are taking warfarin (Coumadin®), you will need an international normalized ratio (INR) blood test drawn 1 to 3 days before the TEE. Your primary care physician can order this. Results must be available before the test.

The TEE procedure nurse will call you the day before the test. They will tell you what time to come to the hospital. They will also give you any other instructions you may need.

Please be prepared to not eat or drink after midnight the day of the procedure. However, you may take your usual medications the day of the test with a sip of water.

Day of the test

On the day of the test, come to the 8th floor Reception Desk in Galter Pavilion, 201 East Huron Street.

Parking is available for patients and visitors in the garage at 222 East Huron Street, across from Feinberg and Galter pavilions. For a discounted rate, please bring your parking ticket with you. You can get your ticket validated at the Customer Services Desks on the 1st and 2nd floors of Feinberg and Galter pavilions or the 1st floor of Prentice Women's Hospital.

If you wear dentures or partials, please remove them before the test. Tell the physician if you have any loose teeth or if you have trouble swallowing food or pills.

Be sure to bring:

- A list of allergies
- A list of all your current medications (prescription, over-the-counter and herbal)
- Your 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. The sedation you will receive during the test causes drowsiness, dizziness and impaired judgment. It will be unsafe for you to drive or operate machinery until the next day.

During the test

To monitor you during the test, the staff will apply:

- Electrocardiogram (ECG) electrodes to monitor your heart
- A cuff on your arm to check your blood pressure
- A finger clip (pulse oximeter) to monitor your oxygen level

Your healthcare team will apply numbing medication to the back of your throat to reduce any discomfort. You will have a bite block in your mouth to protect your teeth. They will place an IV (into the vein) in your hand or arm. You will receive a mild sedative through the IV that will help you relax before the test begins.

During the test, we will help you lie on your left side. The physician will insert a thin, lubricated probe into your mouth and pass it down your esophagus. When the probe is in place, we will take pictures of your heart. After all the pictures are taken, we will remove the probe.

After the test

The staff will monitor you for at least 1 hour 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: If you are an outpatient, you must bring along a responsible adult to accompany you home after the test.

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

If you have any questions, call the Echocardiography Department at 312.926.7483 (TTY: 711). The staff will help you with any questions you may have.