

Transesophageal Echocardiography (TEE) Patient Information Guide

A transesophageal echocardiogram (TEE) is a specialized form of echocardiogram, producing images of your heart from inside, rather than outside of your body; it is performed by a Cardiologist with the help of a nurse and technologist. During a TEE, you swallow a small, flexible tube, through which the echo pictures are taken. This allows a view of the heart through the esophagus (the tube which connects your mouth and stomach), giving diagnostic information not possible from other perspectives. It can be given to patients in an operating room, an intensive care unit, or a hospital bed.

Patient Education

Getting Ready:

- Talk to your doctor about any concerns you have regarding the need for the test, its risks, how it will be done, or what the results will indicate.
- You will need to be **fasting from midnight** before the test, this includes **nothing to eat or drink, and hold all medications till after the procedure.**
- During the test you will receive sedation and you will need someone to drive you home afterwards if you are discharged afterwards.
- You will not be able to drive a motorized vehicle for 24 hours following the test.

During the TEE procedure:

- Before the procedure starts you will be will be changed into a gown and then be taken to the procedure room.
- Before the test you will be asked to gargle with an anesthetic solution which will begin to freeze your throat. Then your throat is sprayed with an anesthetic to freeze it further. You will have an intravenous started in your arm.
- You may be given a mild sedative through the intravenous to help you relax. Then you will be asked to lie on your left side.
- The doctor will gently insert the TEE probe into your mouth. You will be asked to swallow the probe as it is slowly guided into your esophagus. The probe is lubricated to help it slide easily.
- You may feel the doctor moving the probe, but is should not hurt or interfere with your breathing. Your heart rate, blood pressure and breathing will be monitored throughout the test.
- The TEE probe, which has a camera in it, will be in the esophagus for approximately 15 to 20 minutes.
- After the procedure is over, recovery will take 1 to 2 hours depending on the effect of the sedation.

- The total length of time is approximately 2 to 3 hours before being discharged home.

After the TEE procedure:

- You may have some difficulty swallowing right after the test. This will go away in a few hours
- You can eat and drink again when your throat is no longer numb. This will be approximately 2 hours after the procedure. You will not be discharged until you are able to swallow properly.
- You may experience a sore throat for a day or two after the test.
- Someone must accompany and drive you home.
- It is important that you keep your follow-up appointment.

If patients have any concerns or questions after the test, please direct them to call the Echo Lab at (519)376-2121 ext 2272 or go to the nearest emergency department for examination.