

Why is a Transesophageal Echo

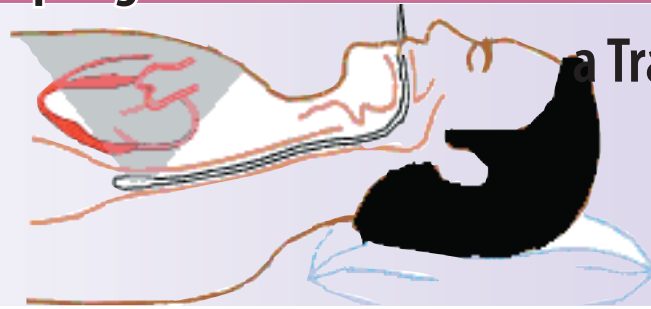
Necessary?

Sometimes, closely positioned ribs, obesity and emphysema may create technical difficulties by limiting the transmission of the ultrasound beams to the heart.

In such cases, your physician may select to get a transesophageal (pronounced trans-esoff-a-gee-ul) echo, where the echo transducer is placed in the esophagus. Since the esophagus sits behind the heart, the echo beam does not have to travel through the front of the chest, avoiding many of the obstacles described above. It offers a much clearer image of the heart, particularly, the back structures, such as the left atrium, which may not be seen as well by a standard echo taken from the front of the heart.

What is

a Transesophageal (TEE) Echo



The TEE echo is a test that allows the doctor to get a better view of the heart's structures. You will be asked to lie on your left side and a sedative is given through an intravenous (IV) line to help in relaxation. The throat is sprayed with an anesthetic to "numb" it. The TEE echo transducer is much smaller than the standard Echo equipment and is positioned at the end of a flexible tube (similar to the tube used to examine the stomach during endoscopy). The tube transfers the images from the transducer to the Echo monitor.

You will begin to swallow the tube as it goes down the esophagus (the same way you would swallow food). Anesthesia and the sedative minimizes discomfort and there is usually no pain. The transducer at the end of the tube is positioned in the esophagus directly behind the heart. By rotating and moving the tip of the transducer, the physician can examine the heart from several different angles.

Special Instructions Before Your Procedure

Please arrive one hour prior to your scheduled surgery time.

- 1) Report to _____
on _____
at _____

- 2) Nothing to eat or drink for 12 hours before your surgery.

- 4) If you are diabetic and take medication to manage your blood sugar or are taking any other medications, please let us know

before your procedure so we can give you specific instructions about taking or stopping medications.

- 5) Tell us if you have any allergies, especially to shellfish, x-ray dye, latex, etc.
- 6) Have someone accompany you to the hospital. You will not be able to drive after the procedure.

Your follow-up appointment has been scheduled for

_____ at _____.

