

Echocardiogram (Echo)

Your child's Echocardiogram is scheduled for (date) _____
at (time) _____. Please stop at a Welcome desk for a badge and
directions to the Cardiology Clinic.
If you have questions, please call (414) 266-2380.

What is an Echocardiogram (echo)?

An echo is an ultrasound of the inside of the heart. It uses sound waves to make moving pictures of the heart. It can find almost every congenital heart defect or problem with the heart muscle.

Special preparation

Children need to be very still and quiet during an echo. This is the best way to record all of the information about your child's heart. If your child is under two years old, medicine will be given to make them sleepy during the test. It is not safe to give this medicine to a baby that has recently eaten. Please be sure to follow the directions below. **The test could be delayed or cancelled if the directions are not followed.**

Eating and Drinking Instructions:

- Nothing to eat or drink after _____.

Your child may have light solid food such as cereal and milk up until 8 hours before the appointment; milk, milk products, formula or fortified breast milk up to 6 hours before the appointment.

Unfortified breast milk can be given up to 4 hours before the appointment

Clear fluids such as Pedialyte, apple juice, or white grape juice can be given up to 2 hours before the appointment

Nothing (not even water) should be given by mouth for 2 hours before the appointment

- Solid food _____
- Milk, milk products, or formula until _____.
- Breast milk until _____.
- Clear liquids until _____.
- Nothing to eat or drink after _____.

How is it done?

The test is done by a doctor or a special technician called a sonographer. Your child will lie on a bed. Stickers like those used for the ECG will be put on their chest. A special ultrasound probe with a small amount of gel on the end is used. The probe is placed on your child's chest, upper abdomen and neck. It does not hurt. Some children do not like the feel of the gel and the probe moving. You can stay with your child before and during the test.

How long will it take?

The test will take about 45 to 60 minutes. If your child was given medicine to make them sleepy, they must be watched by a nurse after the echo. The nurse will make sure your child is fully awake before going home.

Babies 9 months or younger need to stay for 3 hours after they get sedation medicine.

Children older than 9 months may go home when they:

- Are fully awake.
- Have had something to eat or drink.
- Have not vomited after eating or drinking.

Note: If your baby was born prematurely, they may have to stay in the hospital for up to 12 hours for monitoring after their echo.

How do I get the test results? Is there special care after the echo?

Your doctor will read the results and talk with you after the echo. If your child had medicine to make them sleepy, the nurse will go over special directions with you before going home.

Other helpful information

- Bring something for your child to drink when they are awake after the echo.
- Consent must be given from the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) before the test can be done. Be sure to bring all signed legal guardian papers with you.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.