

A Patient's Guide to Heart Ultrasound

Heart Ultrasound is a test that takes “moving pictures” of the heart with sound waves. It provides your doctor with pictures that will help to evaluate your heart's health. A heart ultrasound uses the same technology that allows doctors to see an unborn baby inside a pregnant mother. This examination does not involve radiation.

INSTEAD OF HEART ULTRASOUND, YOUR DOCTOR MAY CALL IT A:

- Transthoracic echocardiogram (TTE for short)
- Echocardiogram (Echo for short)

A DOCTOR MAY ORDER A HEART ULTRASOUND IF YOU HAVE:

- Unexplained chest or upper arm pain
- A heart murmur
- A history of heart disease in your family
- Chest pain or shortness of breath
- Passing out, or stroke symptoms
- High blood pressure
- Family history of heart disease
- A heart murmur
- Abnormal electrocardiogram or chest X-ray

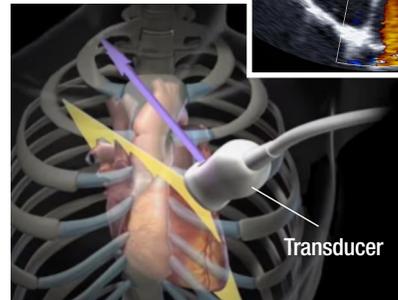
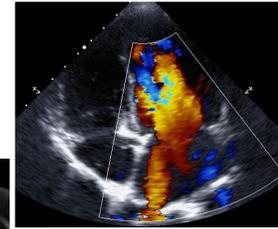
A HEART ULTRASOUND IS:

- Safe (no radiation, no side effects, no pre-medication)
- Appropriate for all ages (from infants to elderly)
- Painless
- Fast (45-60 minutes)
- Non-invasive (no needles, no hospital stay); sometimes, the ultrasound pictures may need enhancement, in which case an ultrasound enhancing agent may be given, which would require an intravenous injection.)

Scan to access patient education resources.



Echocardiogram



Transducer

An echocardiogram uses sound waves to create moving images of the heart

WHAT WILL THIS HEART ULTRASOUND SHOW?

A specialized physician, usually a cardiologist, will study your information and report the findings to your doctor.

These findings may include:

- The size and shape of your heart
- How well your heart is performing
- How your heart valves are functioning
- If there is any fluid (effusion) around your heart

WHAT IF THE HEART ULTRASOUND SHOWS A NEED FOR FOLLOW UP CARE?

Your healthcare provider will be provided with the test results and contact you with more information regarding needed follow up for your care.

The American Society of Echocardiography Education and Research Foundation (ASE Foundation) is ASE's charitable arm, helping to assure the viability and visibility of cardiovascular ultrasound. It was created in 2003 to provide support for initiatives, such as humanitarian missions, training scholarships, and scientific research. Each year, we look to ASE members, the greater community of health care providers, corporate and industry partners, and other foundations to secure the funding needed to realize these goals. Together, we can make a world of difference! For more information please visit us online at ASEFoundation.org.