



# NEWCASTLE ADULT & PAEDIATRIC HEART CENTRE ECHOCARDIOGRAPHY

## CONSUMER INFORMATION –

### STANDARD ECHOCARDIOGRAMS

An echocardiogram is an ultrasound examination of the heart.

Ultrasound uses sound waves to produce images. The sound waves are transmitted into your body from a small hand piece that looks a bit like a microphone (called a transducer). Some of these waves are reflected and are processed by the ultrasound machine to form pictures and assess blood flow in the heart. These pictures are shown on a screen and digitally recorded. A doctor will look at the recording of your study and a report will be forwarded to the referring doctor.

Ultrasound is a safe technique with no known harmful side effects. There is no preparation for this test. The examination will be performed by a sonographer or one of our cardiologists.

#### What to expect

You will be weighed and your height measured prior to the procedure.

You will be shown into the ultrasound room.

Once the procedure has been explained by the sonographer/doctor you will be given privacy to undress from the waist up. A gown/sheet is available for privacy.

You will be required to lie on a couch, positioned lying on the left side to allow the best possible images to be obtained. A jelly like substance (Gel) is then placed on your skin on to the area of interest. This allows transmission of the sound waves into your body. The probe produces sound waves that will form the images. There is usually no discomfort but occasionally firm pressure is needed to be applied to the transducer to achieve a satisfactory study, this could result in slight discomfort for a very short time.

You may be asked to hold your breath - this is very important because when you breathe the organs go up and down in the tummy. When you hold your breath the organs stay still allowing the sonographer to get a better view of them.

Once the procedure has been performed, the Gel will be wiped off and you will be given privacy for getting dressed.

#### In summary

- There no preparations for the procedure.
- There are no known risks associated with the procedure.
- You do not require a full bladder.
- You will be told what to do by the sonographer/doctor prior to your procedure.
- A standard scan takes approximately 30 minutes but please allow a little extra time as sometimes more views are required.

#### Results

Your scan will be read and reported by a cardiologist. The report will then be sent to the referring doctor. The images are digital and are saved to our ultrasound machine.

The results should be at your doctors rooms within five working days of your scan. However we can fax a preliminary report prior to this if necessary.

The sonographer is not able to give you the result on the day. You need to discuss the results with your doctor.