

What is an Echocardiogram with Saline?

Why is an Echocardiogram with saline ordered?

An echocardiogram, also called an “echo” is a test that uses ultrasound waves to examine your heart. This is a safe and relatively painless procedure that helps your physician diagnose a variety of heart problems:

- Heart and chamber size
- Pumping strength
- Valve problems
- Fluid around the heart
- Blood clots or masses inside the heart
- Any abnormal holes between the heart chambers.

An Echocardiogram with Saline “bubble study” is used to add information to a regular echocardiogram, usually to get a better look at the two septums (or walls) that divide the heart down the middle.

*At all of our Echocardiography Labs, the echocardiographic information is obtained by trained Cardiac Sonographers, and the results are interpreted by Cardiologists.

How long will this test take?

Plan to be at the testing area for 35-50 minutes.

Is there any special preparation prior to the test?

No special preparations are necessary before you come to the lab for the test. Please make sure you wear a two-piece outfit, as you will need to change into a gown after you remove your clothing above the waist.

What can I expect on the day of the test?

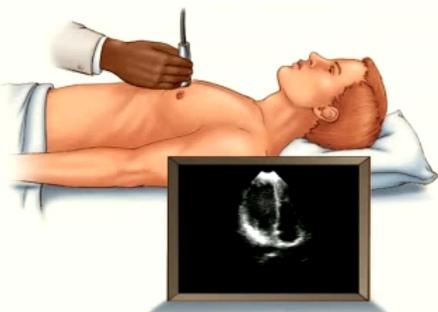
- You will be lying on your left side for the first half of the test, and on your back for the remaining time.
- Sticky patches or electrodes are placed on your chest and connected to wires, which attach you to the echo machine. The wires help to record the electrocardiogram (EKG). Gel is applied to your chest to help conduct the sound waves, and the lights in the room are dimmed.
- The cardiac sonographer guides a small microphone-like device, called a transducer over your chest to obtain different views of your heart. Instructions may also be given for you to breathe slowly or to hold your breath. This helps in obtaining higher quality pictures. The images are constantly viewed on the monitor and are stored digitally for the cardiologist to read.
- Once the sonographer obtains the images needed for the regular echocardiogram, a nurse will come in to place an intravenous (IV) line into a vein in your arm or hand. During this part of test the saline solution will be agitated and injected through the IV line this will create the “bubbles”.
- While the bubbles are passing through the heart, images are acquired. In a normal heart the bubbles are filtered by the lungs and are seen only on the right side of the heart. If the bubbles are seen on the left side, it shows that there is an opening between the two sides of the heart, which is abnormal.

The abnormality can be any of the following:

- ✓ A patent foramen ovale (PFO)
- ✓ An atrial-septal defect

✓ A ventricular septal defect.

The bubble study helps to identify those abnormalities. There are no restrictions following the examination.



How will I get the results of the test?

Results are not available to you at the time of the test. The test will be interpreted by a cardiologist, who will then send the results to your physician. These results are normally available within one (1) working day.

Directions to your appointment

*There are four locations, check to make sure you know where your appointment will be.

Danbury Hospital:

Park in the **RED** parking lot and enter the Stroock lobby on the first floor where you will register and be given direction to the testing area.

If you have further questions please call (203) 739-4999. 8am-4pm

During construction you will park in the Red Lot. Registration for this test will be on the 1st floor Stroock Lobby located next to the Emergency Room.

Danbury Hospital Medical Arts Center:

Located at 111 Osborne Street, in Danbury, CT, park in any available parking or in the Gold parking garage. Enter the main lobby and proceed to the third floor for registration.

If you have further questions please call (203) 739-4999. 8am-4pm

Southbury:

Located at 22 Old Waterbury Road, Southbury, CT., upon arrival please register with Cardiology Reception, in Suite 107. 8am-4pm

If you have any further questions, please call Southbury Cardiology at (203) 262-4234.

Ridgefield:

Located at 21 South Street, Ridgefield, CT, upon arrival please register with Cardiology Reception 8am-4pm

If you have any further questions please call Ridgefield cardiology at (203) 438-1323

Additional information can also be found at our website;

www.westernconnecticuthealthnetwork.org.