

Transesophageal Echocardiography (TEE)

- **The test takes about 1 - 1½ hours.**
- This test is not recommended for anyone who has esophageal disease, such as cancer, strictures, varices, cirrhosis, or people who are having problems with swallowing food or liquids.
- Bring a list of current medicine (including over-the-counter medicine and herbals) and allergies.
- If you are an outpatient, bring someone to drive you home.
- If you have any questions before the test, ask the doctor or nurse.

What Is A TEE?

Transesophageal Echocardiography (TEE) is an ultrasound test to check your heart. By having you swallow a mobile, flexible probe, the cardiologist (heart specialist) can see the structure of your heart without having the skin, rib cage and muscles of the chest interfere with the pictures.

To Prepare

- Do not eat or drink for at least six (6) hours before your test.
- If you are having this test done as an outpatient, arrive at Registration at least 30 minutes before your test is scheduled.

What To Expect

- In the testing area, you will be asked to change into a hospital gown.
- You will be asked to read and sign your consent form for the TEE test and sedation. Please bring reading glasses, if needed.
- You will be asked questions by a nurse about your medical history.
- You will have an intravenous (IV) line for medicine for sedation to help you relax.
- The back of your throat will be numbed with anesthetic spray so you can swallow the probe without gagging. You might think the anesthetic spray tastes bad.

What To Expect (continued)

- When your throat is numb and you feel relaxed, the test will begin.
- You will be monitored closely during the test.
- You will be placed on your left side facing the doctor.
- The doctor will place the TEE probe (a flexible tube) into your mouth and tell you to swallow deeply.
- As you swallow, the probe will be moved slowly into your esophagus (throat or food tube) directly behind your heart.
- Once the probe is in place, the doctor will check your heart thoroughly, and then remove the TEE probe.
- The TEE probe is in your throat about 15 minutes. The time you will be apart from your family or driver will be about 1 to 1 1/2 hours. Family or friends will be instructed to wait in the waiting room while you are in the testing area.
- You might fall asleep during the test.

After The Test

- The most common side effects after the test are mild throat irritation and feeling tired which clears in a few hours.
- Do not eat or drink anything for 2-6 hours after the test.
- The TEE report will be faxed to your doctor that ordered the test.
- If you have any questions after the TEE, please call your doctor.