

What is a transthoracic echocardiogram?

A TTE uses sound waves (ultrasound) to create moving images of your heart. It lets doctors see:

- Heart chambers and valves
- Blood flow through the heart
- Heart muscle function

What happens during the test?

- You'll lie on an exam bed, usually on your side
- A technician (cardiac sonographer) places a small probe (transducer) on your chest
- A gel is applied to help transmit sound waves
- The probe moves around your chest to capture images

You may be asked to:

- Breathe in certain ways
- Briefly hold your breath

The test usually takes **30–40 minutes**

How to prepare

- **No special preparation** is needed
- You can eat, drink, and take medications as usual (unless told otherwise)
- Wear comfortable clothing (you may need to change into a gown)

Risks or side effects

There are **no significant risks**. Occasionally:

- Mild discomfort from probe pressure
- Slight skin irritation from the gel (rare)