

## INFORMATION FOR YOUR TRANSESOPHAGEAL ECHOCARDIOGRAM (TEE)

### WHAT IS A TRANSESOPHAGEAL ECHOCARDIOGRAM (TEE)?

Echocardiography is the use of ultrasound waves to produce an image of the heart's structure and function. With a transesophageal echocardiogram, a long, slender, flexible tube is inserted into the mouth, through the esophagus and into the stomach. Transesophageal echocardiograms produces highly detailed images of the heart because there are no internal structures to obstruct the view. This test can help the doctor determine if you have any blood clots in the heart, congenital abnormalities, heart valve problems, a heart infection or diseases of the aorta, as well as determine the overall function of the heart muscle. During the procedure, you will be given medication to help you relax.

### PREPARING FOR YOUR TRANSESOPHAGEAL ECHOCARDIOGRAM

- You will need to arrive at the hospital 1 ½ hours before the procedure.
- Do not eat or drink anything for six hours prior to the procedure.
- You may take your medications as directed with small sips of water, except water pills or diuretics, like Lasix or furosemide. You can take those after the procedure.
- Bring you current medications with you to the hospital.
- If you have any disease or problem with the esophagus, such as ulcers or stricture (narrowing), or if you have had any surgery on your esophagus, please notify the doctor doing the procedure.

### WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE TRANSESOPHAGEAL ECHOCARDIOGRAM?

- Before the procedure, you will be given an explanation of the test and then asked to sign a consent form.
- A nurse will insert an intravenous catheter into your hand or arm.
- Electrodes will be placed on your chest and connected to a monitor for a continuous readout of your heart rhythm.
- Your blood pressure and oxygen levels will be monitored throughout the test.
- You will be given medication to swish and swallow to help numb the back of your throat.
- The back of your throat will also be sprayed with medication to help numb the area.
- A sedative will be administered to make you sleepy.
- You will be placed on your left side.
- You may receive some oxygen during the procedure because of the sedation.

## **WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE TRANSESOPHAGEAL ECHOCARDIOGRAM? (CONT.)**

- After you are asleep, a long, slender, flexible tube that has an ultrasound-imaging device near its tip will be directed from the mouth, down the esophagus and into the stomach, where pictures will be taken of your heart.
- The procedure lasts approximately 30 minutes.

## **POST-PROCEDURE INSTRUCTIONS**

- It will take approximately 30 minutes for you to fully awaken.
- You will be discharged from the hospital as soon as you are fully awake and able to take liquids without difficulty. Keep in mind the back of your throat was numbed, so it may take one hour for that to return to normal after the procedure.
- You will need someone to drive you home after the procedure.
- Avoid driving for 24 hours after the procedure if you have received any sedation during the procedure.
- Your blood pressure, heart rhythm and oxygen levels will be monitored for about one hour after the procedure.
- The back of your throat may be sore for a few days after the procedure.
- If there is any bleeding from the back of your throat, let the physician know.

## **WHEN WILL I KNOW THE RESULTS OF MY TRANSESOPHAGEAL ECHOCARDIOGRAM?**

- The final interpretation of the test results will be completed by the cardiologist doing the procedure.
- You should know the test results before you are discharged from the hospital.
- The physician ordering your test and family doctor will receive a report of the test.