

Transesophageal Echocardiography (TEE):

A transesophageal echocardiogram (TEE) creates images of the heart using an ultrasound transducer at the end of a long tube in your esophagus (swallowing tube). While this sounds like it will be uncomfortable, all patients are sedated before imaging is started, and most patients sleep through the whole test without remembering the test itself. TEE imaging produces the highest resolution heart images possible because the ultrasound transducer within the esophagus is almost in contact with the heart itself. The examination takes about 90 minutes to complete, but the transducer is only in the esophagus for a very short time (8 to 30 min), depending on complexity of the cardiac anatomy and pathology. Detailed instructions about the examination are as follows:

- TEE uses exactly the same ultrasound technology as a surface echocardiogram, but the imaging transducer is on the end of a long tube that is passed into the esophagus by the physician. While this sounds uncomfortable, patients are sedated and typically sleep through the procedure and usually do not remember that the test was even performed.
- The weekday before the test you will be called by one of our nurses and given instructions on how to prepare for the test. If you know that you will be unreachable at your usual phone number, please call 585-275-8218 and ask to speak to one of the echo nurses a day or two before your exam to discuss the testing procedures.
- Unless your doctor tells you otherwise, continue to take your medications normally.
- You must fast for at least 6 hours before the TEE procedure. You may take your medications with a sip of water, but otherwise no other solids or liquids for 6 hours before coming to the echo lab. If you are a diabetic on insulin, your doctor may instruct you to alter your insulin dosage the day of the test if you are missing a meal. You will be allowed to return to your usual diet after the TEE is complete.
- You must bring someone with you to the echo lab to be present before the test and to take you home afterward, as you will not be able to drive for 12 hours after completion of the examination. It is also a good idea to have someone stay with you for several hours following the test, although this is not absolutely required.
- Once you arrive in the echo lab, one of our nurses will take your history and get you prepared for the test. This preparation will include placing an intravenous line.
- Our nurse will take your medical history, so please bring a list of your medications with you.
- Please tell our nurse if you have an allergy to latex.
- You will also be asked if you have a history of sleep apnea, and specifically if you use a CPAP machine. Depending on your history and other risk factors, you may be fitted for a CPAP machine to be used during the TEE procedure.
- We request that you bring at least your driver with you into the exam room, but you may bring other family members as well. We like to review all the specifics of the exam with you and your family present. Your driver and/or family members will then be asked to leave the exam room for the procedure, but then will return once the imaging is complete. We will review the images and the results of the test with you and your family before you leave the echo lab.
- In order to perform the exam, clothing must be removed from the upper body. Females will be covered by a gown to maintain privacy. Sheets, blankets, and pillows are available for your comfort.
- You may wear glasses, and hearing aids to the lab, but these will be removed for the imaging portion of the test.
- If you wear dentures, please do not use denture adhesive the day of the exam, as all removable oral appliances will be removed for the imaging portion of the exam.
- Pacemakers and/or defibrillators will not interfere with the exam.

- There is no radiation involved with the exam; only sound waves which are harmless to you and technologist.
- Please avoid jewelry that hangs down to the chest and/or lotions, oils, or powders that may inhibit the adhesive of EKG electrodes.
- Please tell our staff if you have an allergy to latex products or rubber gloves.
- You will be asked to lie still on your left side and back. Please tell the nurse if your ability to lie is limited.
- You will be given medication by vein over about 10 minutes that will slowly induce sleep. The TEE probe will then be advanced into your esophagus (swallowing tube) and stomach so that detailed images of your heart can be made. The actual imaging portion of the test is less than 15 minutes in most patients, but may be as long as 30 minutes in some patients with particular complex cardiac problems.
- Training physicians, students, or other imaging staff may observe or participate in your exam.
- Every TEE exam is performed by a physician with special training in echocardiography and they will provide you and your family with a complete interpretation immediately after the exam.
- Once the test is complete, your driver will take you home to rest for 12 hours, after which you may resume normal activities without restriction.
- Most commonly, there is no residual effects after the TEE, but occasionally patients will notice a mild sore throat that resolves over a few days. We will want to know immediately if you notice more than a mild sore throat, especially if there is significant painful swallowing, swelling of you neck or a new fever. We can be reached at our office number during work hours (585-275-8218), and after hours the cardiology fellow on call can be reached through the URMIC page office (585-275-2222).
- Your images and reports are stored for future review and comparison. Your records are confidential and accessible only by your healthcare providers.
- Stored images and reports may be used for education, research or quality control purposes. All healthcare information used for these purposes are stripped of personal information.