

Your guide to getting an Echocardiogram in New Zealand



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to your
heart 

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What is an echo, what does it involve?

An Echocardiogram (echo) uses soundwaves to look at the function of your heart.

If your doctor hears a murmur they may book you in for an echo. An echo is used to evaluate the function of your heart, looking for signs of heart disease, in particular heart valve disease.

Your heart will be scanned using a small wand that is moved across the surface of your chest to capture images of your heart.



What are the risks of getting an echo?

An echo can't harm you. An echo doesn't hurt and has no side effects.

What happens after the echo?

- Your cardiologist will talk with you after looking at your echo pictures and discuss what the pictures show and "Where do we go from here?". A copy of your results will be sent to your GP.
- If heart valve disease is diagnosed and it is severe your doctor may refer you to a heart team for assessment. A heart team is a multi-disciplinary team that has different specialists including a cardiologist, cardiac surgeon and anaesthetist. They will decide the best treatment option for you based on your general health, anatomy and age.
- Remember to ask your cardiologist about both TAVI and Surgery as treatment options for you.

During the early stages of heart valve disease (mild and moderate) your doctor may decide to watch your condition. As it worsens you will need to have your heart valve replaced¹.

An echo² helps your doctor find out:

- The size and shape of your heart
- How your heart moves
- The heart's pumping strength
- If the heart valves are working correctly
- If blood is leaking backwards through your heart valves (regurgitation)
- If the heart valves are too narrow (stenosis) and are not opening fully

Echo tests are done by trained sonographers. You may have your test done in your doctor's office or a hospital room. No special preparation is required. You can eat and drink before the test like you usually would.

Once you arrive for your echo, you will need to undress to the waist in a private space and a hospital gown will be provided. The test will take about 30-60 minutes and you may be asked to change positions, commonly on your back or left side.

After your echo you will be able to carry on with your day as normal and the results will be sent to your GP or cardiologist who will discuss them with you.

Where can I get one?

Your GP can refer you for an echo through the public or private health systems.

Public wait lists can be long. There is the option to get an echo done privately which is usually quicker, and the average cost in New Zealand is approximately \$600. Depending on your health insurance policy, you may be able to claim back expenses for diagnostic testing.



Private echocardiogram providers in New Zealand include:

The Heart Group

Central Auckland Clinic

The Heart Group, 1 Gilgit Rd,
Epsom, Auckland
(09) 623 1020

Northern Clinic

Southern Cross Hospital
212 Wairau Road,
Wairau Valley, Auckland
(09) 925 4400

Ormiston Hospital

125 Ormiston Road,
Flat Bush, Auckland
(09) 250 1157

Totara Health Services

1 Macrae Way
New Lynn, Auckland
(09) 827 8888

Waitematā Cardiology

Suite 4, Level 1,
181 Shakespeare Rd,
Milford, Auckland
(09) 918 1666

Cardiology Institute Ltd

North Shore Clinic

Suite 109, Level 1,
119 Apollo Dr,
Albany, Auckland
(09) 980 6363

Central Clinic

110 Grafton Road,
Grafton, Auckland
(09) 980 6363

Counties Manukau Health Cardiology

Middlemore Hospital

Hospital Road,
Ōtāhuhu, Auckland
(09) 276 0000

Manukau Superclinic

901 Great South Road,
Manurewa, Auckland
(09) 277 1660

Midland Cardio- Vascular Services

24 Ohaupo Road,
Hamilton Lake, Hamilton
(07) 843 1895

Waikato Heart

Anglesea Clinic

Suite 1, 2nd Floor
9 Thackeray Street,
Hamilton
(07) 957 6080

Cardiac Services

1 Dawson Street
Hamilton
(07) 839 7664

Bay Radiology

Grace Hospital

281 Cheyne Rd Oropi
(07) 578 0273
or (0800) 467 4260

Hamilton Radiology

Gate 2, 11 Thackeray Street,
Hamilton
(07) 839 4909
or 0800 426 723

Absolute Radiology

56 Molesworth Street,
New Plymouth
(06) 222 0202

Wakefield Heart Centre

99 Rintoul St,
Newtown, Wellington
(04) 381 8115

CardioLabs

3 Whitehouse Road,
Titahi Bay, Porirua
(04) 213 7346

Heart Specialists

Leinster Chambers

St Georges Hospital
249 Papanui Rd,
Christchurch
(03) 375 6000

Cardiology Specialists

Hiatt Chambers

St Georges Hospital
249 Papanui Road,
Christchurch
(03) 355 6056

Christchurch Heart Group

Milford Chambers

St Georges Hospital
249 Papanui Road,
Christchurch
(03) 355 3750

South Island Heart

Christchurch

Level 1, 132 Peterborough
Street, Christchurch
(03) 365 5655

Queenstown

4 Thirteenth Avenue,
Lower Shotover,
Queenstown
(03) 365 5655

Southern DHB Cardiology

Dunedin Public Hospital

201 Great King St,
Dunedin
(03) 474 0999 ext 59997

Invercargill Hospital

Kew Road, Kingswell,
Invercargill
(03) 474 0999 ext 59997

Mercy Heart Centre

72 Newington Avenue
Māori Hill, Dunedin
(03) 464 0107

Top of the South Cardiology

105 Kawai Street
Nelson
(03) 343 2425
or 021 229 5839

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Information on this material includes educational information regarding certain conditions and potential therapies or treatment options. Other therapies or treatment options may be available, and you should discuss any educational information you access online with your healthcare professional. Appropriate treatment for individuals is a matter for healthcare professionals to decide in consultation with each individual.

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¹ Vahanian A, Blanc JJ, Budaj A, et al. Guidelines on the management of valvular heart disease. Eur Ht J. 2007. 28:230-68

² www.healthnavigator.org.nz/health-a-z/e/echocardiogram/

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