### Your guide to getting an Echocardiogram in New Zealand





## 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 replaced<sup>1</sup>.

## An echo' 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.

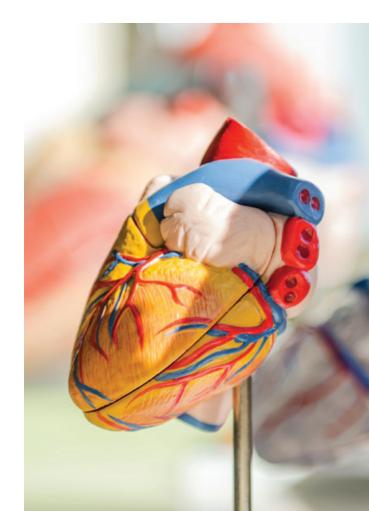
Once you arrive for your echo, you will need to undress to the waist in a private space and a hospital gown will be provided. The test will take about 30-60 minutes and you may be asked to change positions, commonly on your back or left side.

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, Tītahi 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

#### listentoyourheart.co.nz



f Find us on Facebook

TAPS Approval No: NP18163