



Patient Information

Transoesophageal Echocardiogram



What is a transoesophageal echocardiogram?

A transoesophageal echocardiogram (TOE) is a heart scan that uses ultrasound (sound waves) to produce images of the heart. The test is painless and does not use radiation. It involves swallowing a soft flexible tube as the pictures are taken via the gullet.

How is an Echo performed?

A TOE allows the Cardiologist to take extremely detailed images of your heart. A TOE is often used to look carefully at the valves and the structure of the heart. The TOE will help the doctor decide on the best treatment for your heart. This procedure is performed as a day-case. You will have stickers attached to your chest so that your heart rate can be monitored throughout the scan. You will also have your blood pressure checked and be given oxygen via nasal cannula. You will be able to breathe completely normally throughout the test.

You will have some local anaesthetic sprayed on the back of your throat and then asked to lay on your left-hand side. A drip may be placed in your arm. If you have dentures, you will be asked to remove them before the test. Often, you will then be given some sedation to relax you, although you will not be completely asleep. You will then be asked to swallow the TOE probe. This part may cause discomfort but is not painful. Recorded images of the heart will then be obtained. The test will take about 20 minutes.

At the end of the procedure, the tube will be removed, your blood pressure will be checked again, and you will have a short period of recovery.

Before the TOE

You must NOT eat or drink anything for 6 hours before the test. Normal medications should be taken on the morning of the TOE with a small sip of water. Please bring a copy of your prescription with you. If you are diabetic, please inform the nurses as soon as you arrive at the Day Care unit. If you are on Warfarin, your INR should have been checked within the preceding 7 days. Any direct oral anticoagulants (DOACs) should be stopped 24 hours prior to the TOE.

Please inform your doctor if you have any problems with swallowing, or if you have had any bleeding from your stomach. This may prevent the TOE from being performed.

Risks and Complications

The TOE scan is extremely safe, but there are some risks you need to be aware of. It is not uncommon to have a sore throat after the procedure. This may last for a day or two. Occasionally the throat may bruise or bleed slightly. There is a rare chance of inhaling stomach contents during the procedure if your stomach is not empty. This is

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why it is important that you do NOT eat or drink anything for six hours before the procedure.

There is an extremely small risk (less than 1 in 10,000) of damaging or tearing the gullet. In extreme circumstances, this may require an operation to repair the damage. Your doctor would not be requesting the TOE unless he or she felt it would help in deciding on the best treatment for your heart. If you have any questions regarding the TOE please contact your doctor's secretary, or this unit.

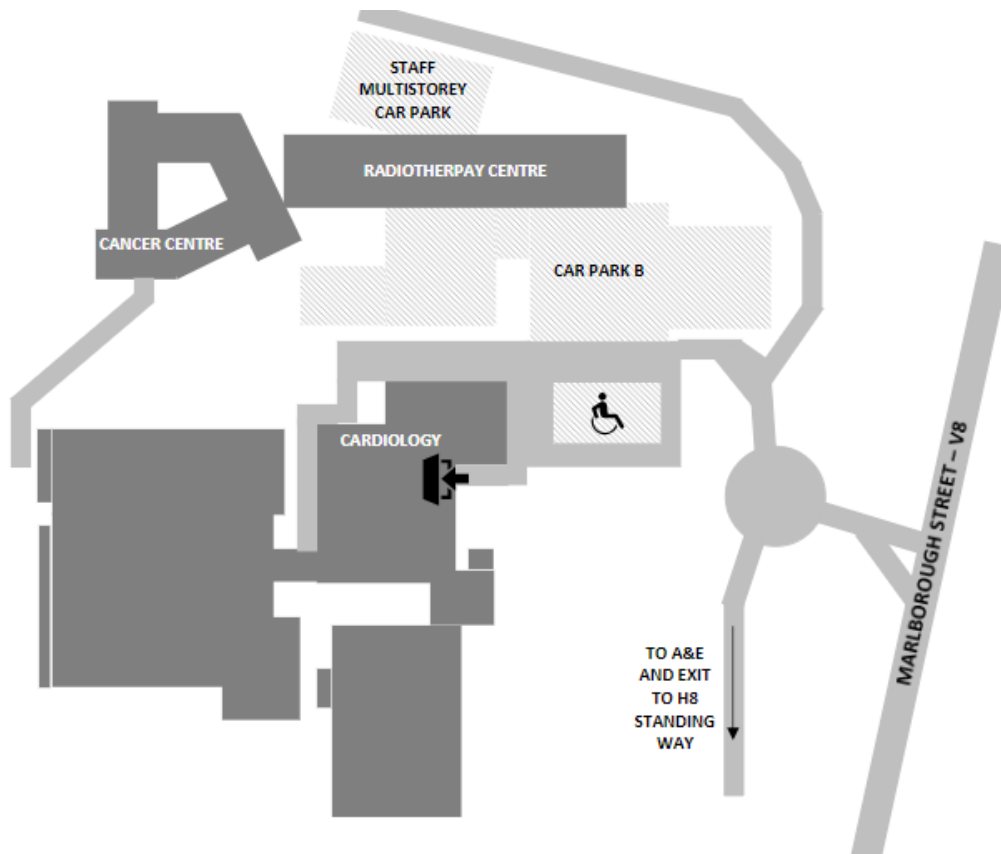
After the TOE

After the TOE, you will be monitored for a short period of recovery. When you are fully alert and the sensation has returned to your throat, you will be allowed a drink. You will be allowed home when you are fully awake, usually 2-3 hours after the procedure. Before you are discharged, the results of the scan will be explained to you. If you have been given sedation, you should NOT drive or operate heavy machinery for the remainder of the day. You should be accompanied home by a friend or relative. You can go back to normal activities the following day.

Directions

The nearest car park to Cardiology is Car Park B where payment is CARD ONLY upon exit.

Please enter via the Cardiology Reception entrance



If
you have any questions about your Exercise Stress
Echocardiogram, please phone:
Cardiac Catheter Lab
01908 996539
(Monday - Friday 8.00am – 18:00pm)

We encourage patients to be involved in their care by:

1. Being part of the conversation and shared decision making
2. Asking questions if something is not clear
3. Speaking up if you have concerns

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Checks are there to protect you and you can be part of them. Behave with respect and kindness towards healthcare professionals.

We ask for information about you so that you can receive proper care and treatment. This information remains confidential and is stored securely by the Trust in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018/GDPR. Further guidance can be found within our privacy notice found on our Trust website: www.mkuh.nhs.uk

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