

WHAT IS IT?

Ambulatory ECG monitoring provides your Cardiologist with a recording of your heart's electrical activity over a prolonged period.

There are two variants: Holter monitoring and event monitoring. With Holter monitoring, the recording is continuous over a 24 or 48 hour period. With event monitoring, the device is worn for up to 7 days but only records when you instruct it to do so.

Both monitors can record heart rate and rhythm when you feel chest pain or symptoms of an irregular heart beat (called arrhythmia or sometimes dysrhythmia). Your Cardiologist can look at the recording around the time of your symptoms.

This information can help clarify the presence and nature of any heart problem.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT?

Both tests are painless. You will need to come to our testing centre to have the monitor fitted. You should bathe before you come to the doctor's office, as you cannot do so whilst wearing the Holter monitor. An event monitor, however, may be removed when bathing is required.

A technician will clean your chest with alcohol in the areas where the electrodes are attached.

For men, the nurse may have to shave some small areas of your chest. The electrodes stick to the skin with a gel.

Sometimes, an electrode and lead wire will be taped to your chest to prevent them from moving.



WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW?

Whilst wearing the monitor, you need to keep a diary of your daily activities. This helps your Cardiologist to understand what you were doing during the times of abnormal readings. Otherwise, you can do your typical activities, except those that might result in wetting the monitor.

After the end of the recording period, you will return to our centre to have the equipment removed.

We will analyse the readings and send a report to your doctor who will discuss the results with you.



▲ The ECG leads are attached to stick-on electrodes which are placed around the front of the chest.

◀ Example of a Holter monitor. The computer (grey box) reads the electrical activity received from the ECG leads. Event monitors appear similar.

TESTING

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