

Transoesophageal Echocardiography - Patient Information

For bookings, call (07) 3858 8690

What is it?

Transoesophageal echocardiography (TOE) uses soundwaves to produce images of the heart.

Unlike standard echocardiography, TOE uses a tube-like device placed in the mouth and passed down the throat into the oesophagus (the food pipe that connects the throat to the stomach) to record images of the heart.

This test shows our cardiologists the size, shape, and movement of your heart muscle and valves.

In atrial fibrillation, this procedure may be used for detailed examination of the left atrium and left atrial appendage.

What should I expect?

Do not eat or drink anything for 6 hours before your test. If you have diabetes, you should talk to your Cardiologist about food and insulin intake because these can affect your blood sugar levels.

What should I expect?

The procedure typically takes no longer than 20 minutes. At the beginning of the procedure, the cardiologist numbs your throat with an anaesthetic spray.

The cardiologist then places a needle connected to a tube (called an intravenous line or 'IV') into an arm vein. Sedation given through this IV helps you relax throughout the test and most people fall asleep. Next, the cardiologist passes the small flexible TOE probe into your throat. You will then be instructed to swallow and the probe gently moves down your throat into your oesophagus.

When the probe is in place, you should not feel any pain. On the end of the probe is the ultrasound camera which takes pictures of your heart from different angles.

Removal of the probe and IV line occurs when all of the required pictures are taken. You may feel sleepy and will not be allowed to eat or drink until the sedative and anaesthetic have worn off.

Monitoring of your heart rate and blood pressure occurs during this recovery period.

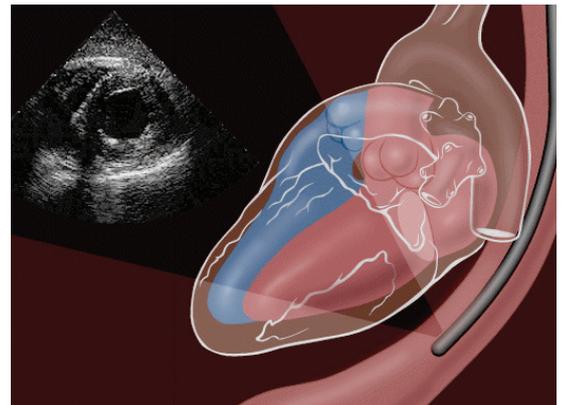
How long does the entire test take?

A patient should allow 1 hour for the entire test, including the preparation, echo imaging and stress test.

Following the procedure

You may find that you have a sore throat or trouble swallowing after the procedure, however, these side effects usually subside after a day. Occasionally, you may be required to stay in hospital overnight.

By law, you must not drive a motor vehicle or operate machinery within 12 hours of this procedure. Therefore, you will need to organise transport home and a responsible adult should stay with you during the rest of the day.



▲ The TOE probe, when placed in the food pipe, can capture high quality pictures of the heart.