

700 Children's Drive
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nationwidechildrens.org

ECHOCARDIOGRAM: SEDATED

An echocardiogram (EK-oh-CARD-ee-oh-gram), often called an “Echo,” is an ultrasound of the heart. Most often the test lasts about 30 minutes. You should plan to spend about two and one-half hours in the department. Although it does not hurt, children younger than three years of age have trouble lying still for this long. It is important to get good pictures of your child’s heart to manage your child’s care. Because of your child’s age and the need to get enough good pictures, your doctor has ordered a “*sedated Echo*.”

A sedated Echo means that your child will be asleep while the test is done. The medicine we give your child is not anesthesia.

BEFORE THE TEST

- When the appointment for the sedated Echo is made, a nurse will call to tell you the time and date of your appointment. The nurse will tell you what your child may eat or drink before the test.
- **It is very important to carefully follow the instructions for withholding food and drink from your child for a period of time before the test. If you do not, it could mean that your child will not be allowed to have the sedated Echo.**
- On the day of the appointment, you will come to the Cardiology Clinic to register. After you are registered, a nurse will take you back to the pre-sedation area. Here you will be asked questions about your child’s recent health.
- After a physical exam, the nurse will talk to the doctor about the sedation medicine your child will receive. You will be asked to sign a consent form for the sedation. Then the nurse will give the medication to your child.

HOW THE TEST IS DONE

After the medication is given, you will be asked to hold your child until he or she is asleep. Most children fall asleep about 20 to 30 minutes after receiving the medicine. If your child does not fall asleep within this time, the nurse may give your child another dose of the medicine.

After your child is asleep, he will be moved to another room where the Echo will be done. The nurse will place a device called an *oxygen saturation monitor* on your child’s left foot. An automatic blood pressure cuff will be placed on his right leg.

The nurse will closely monitor your child while he is asleep.

The Cardiac sonographer will perform the test. After the test is over, your child will be moved back to the sedation area and will be watched closely until he or she is awake. This could take from 1 to 1½ hours.

After your child is awake, he may have some clear liquids. When he is keeping the liquids down well, your child may have crackers. We will continue to watch your child closely until he is fully awake. Then you may take your child home.

AFTERCARE

After being released to go home, your child may eat or drink his usual foods. If he is old enough to walk, he may still be a little off balance for awhile. For this reason we suggest that you watch your child around stairs and hard surfaces.

Your child may be a little irritable the afternoon of the test, and he might need an extra nap that afternoon. The next morning after the test, there should be no after effects from the medication that was used for sedation.