

Transesophageal Echocardiogram (TEE)

What is a TEE?

A **transesophageal** [tranz-eh-soff-ug-JEE-uhl] **echocardiogram** [ek-oh-CAR-dee-oh-gram] (**TEE**) uses an ultrasound **transducer** [tranz-DOO-sur] to send high-frequency sound waves through your chest.

During a TEE, the transducer is guided into your **esophagus** [eh-SOFF-eh-gus] until it rests directly behind your heart. As the waves bounce (or “echo”) off structures in the heart, the sound waves are turned into images on a computer. The sound waves do not have to pass through skin, muscle, or bone so the TEE can provide better images than a standard echocardiogram.

A TEE can show detailed information about your heart, including the:

- Size and structure of the heart chambers, and any problems, such as an opening in a chamber wall
- Amount of blood the heart can pump
- Structure and movement of heart valves, or the condition of an implanted artificial valve
- Condition of the blood vessels
- Presence of blood clots or tumors in the heart

What are the risks and benefits of TEE?

The table below lists the most common possible benefits, risks, and alternatives for TEE. Other benefits and risks may apply in your unique medical situation. Talk with your healthcare provider to learn more about the risks and benefits. Be sure to ask any questions you have.

Possible benefits	Risks and possible complications	Alternatives
TEE can help your doctor see structures that may not show up on other tests or on a regular echocardiogram.	The possible risks and complications include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A possible reaction to sedatives. • Nausea or mouth /throat discomfort from the transducer. • Injury your esophagus, which may cause infection or bleeding (rare). 	Alternative tests include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard echocardiogram • Exercise stress test • EKG or Holter monitor testing • CT scan, MRI, or nuclear test However, TEE offers a more detailed view of certain heart problems.

What do I need to do now?

- 1 Follow all instructions about eating and drinking before your procedure.
- 2 Arrange for a ride to and from the test. You will not be allowed to drive yourself home afterward.
- 3 Make a list of medicines you are taking. Include any prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs (such as cough syrup or allergy pills), patches, inhalers, vitamins, and herbs. Bring this list with you to the hospital.
- 4 Tell your doctor if you have any allergies, especially to any medicines.

Why do I need a TEE?

Your doctor may recommend a TEE if a standard echocardiogram is not possible, if highly detailed information is needed, or if the standard test produced poor images. A TEE is also sometimes used during open heart surgery or a cardiac catheterization [kath-eh-ter-ize-AY-shun].

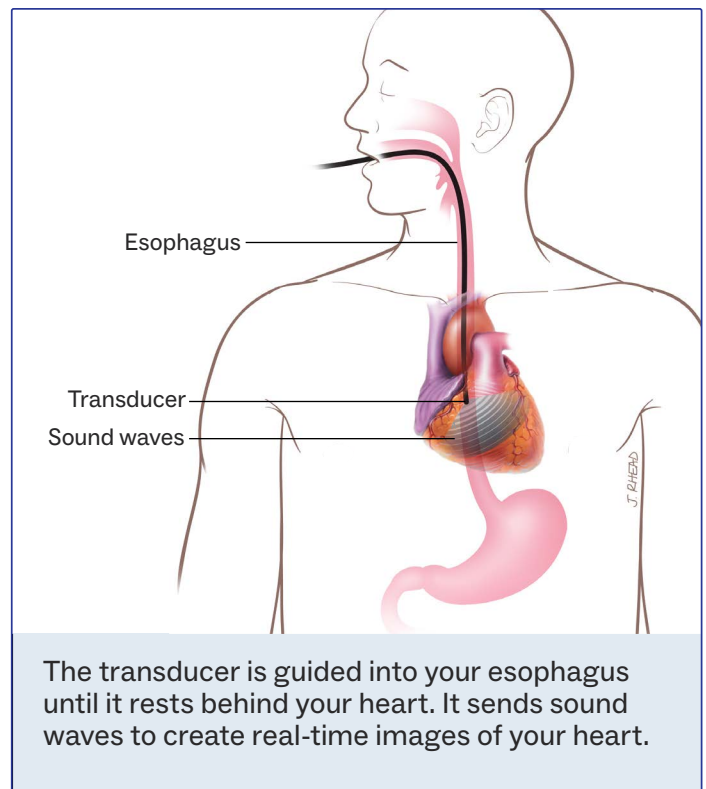
What can I expect during a TEE?

- **You will need to take off any jewelry and take out dentures if you wear them.** You will also take off any clothing above the waist and put on a gown. You will lie on your side or back on the bed, and electrodes will be attached to your chest.
- **You will receive IV (intravenous) medicine, called a sedative, to help you relax.** A cuff will be placed on your arm and a clip will be attached to your finger so your healthcare providers can watch your blood pressure and pulse. You will be given oxygen during the test.
- **Your throat will be numbed with a throat spray, gel, or liquid.**
- **You will be given a block to bite.** This will protect your teeth during the test.
- **The doctor will pass a small, flexible tube called an endoscope down your throat and into your esophagus.** You'll be asked to swallow to help it go down. You may gag a bit, but this is normal. It may help to remember that the tube is no larger than most food you might swallow.
- **The doctor will use the transducer to take ultrasound images of your heart.** This usually takes 10 to 45 minutes.

When should I call my doctor?

Call your doctor's office if you have any of these symptoms:

- Pain or bleeding
- Difficulty swallowing more than 1 or 2 hours after the test
- Any other symptom that is not normal for you



What happens after a TEE?

- **The probe and IV will be taken out.** The medical team will watch you until the sedative wears off.
- **Your throat will be numb.** Do not eat or drink anything until the feeling comes back in your throat, usually within 1 to 4 hours. Start with liquids and soft foods such as gelatin, pudding, or soup.
- **You may feel weak or tired** for the rest of the day.
- **You might have a sore throat for a few days.** Gargle with warm water or use cough drops.
- **You will not be allowed to drive, operate hazardous machinery, or make any important decisions until the day after the procedure.**
- **Your doctor will talk with you about your results.**
- **You can go back to work the next day.**

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