

# Ambulatory Telemetry

## What is ambulatory telemetry?

**Ambulatory** [AM-byoo-leh-tohr-ee] **telemetry** [tuh-LEM-eh-tree] is a type of heart monitoring. It uses lightweight, portable equipment to record your heart's electrical activity while you go about your daily life.

If an in-office test like an electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG) doesn't reveal the source of your symptoms, a longer test may be needed to "catch your heart in the act." Monitoring can last for a few days to several weeks. The goal is to discover if symptoms such as dizziness, shortness of breath, chest pain, or fainting are caused by a heart rhythm problem.

## What should I do when I have a symptom?

If you faint, get dizzy, or feel anything unusual with your heart:

- **Stop what you're doing and press the button on your communicator.** Pressing the button flags the data record. When the technician reviews the data at the center, the flag shows where to look for signs of heart rhythm problems.
- **Call the center as soon as possible.** When you get your equipment, you'll get a toll-free phone number to call any time you have a symptom. A technician is always available to gather more information about your symptom and connect it with the information from your monitor. If you can't call right away, take notes on the times you feel the symptoms and call the center later.

## What do I need to do?

- 1 **Keep the communicator and monitor close to each other.** If they are too far apart, the information can't be sent. An alarm will beep if the communicator is more than 15 feet from the monitor.
- 2 **Keep the monitor and communicator fully charged.** Your information will not be recorded and sent if either the monitor or the communicator lose power.
- 3 **Change the battery in the monitor as needed.** With your monitor, you'll get two rechargeable batteries and a battery charger. Each battery lasts 12 to 24 hours. Recharge one battery while using the other one. You'll hear an alarm beep when the battery needs to be charged.
- 4 **Charge the communicator while you sleep.** With the communicator, you'll get a charger plug. One end plugs into the communicator and the other end plugs into a wall outlet. Plug it in nearby while you sleep (within 15 feet of the bed).
- 5 **Keep the equipment dry.** Take the electrodes and monitor off before you swim or take a bath or shower. Put the electrodes and monitor back on afterward.
- 6 **Change the electrodes every day.** Fresh electrodes will provide better information. Follow the directions provided with your equipment.
- 7 **If you have a pacemaker or ICD (implantable cardio defibrillator), do not put the monitor near it.** Wear the monitor at your waist.

Learn about radio telemetry and how it works on [page 2](#).

## What should I do at the end of the monitoring period?

Your doctor will tell you how long to wear the monitor — this may be as long as 30 days. When this period is done:

- **Return all the equipment**, following the directions you were given with the equipment about where and how to send it.
- **Call the center** to make sure your study is completed right away.

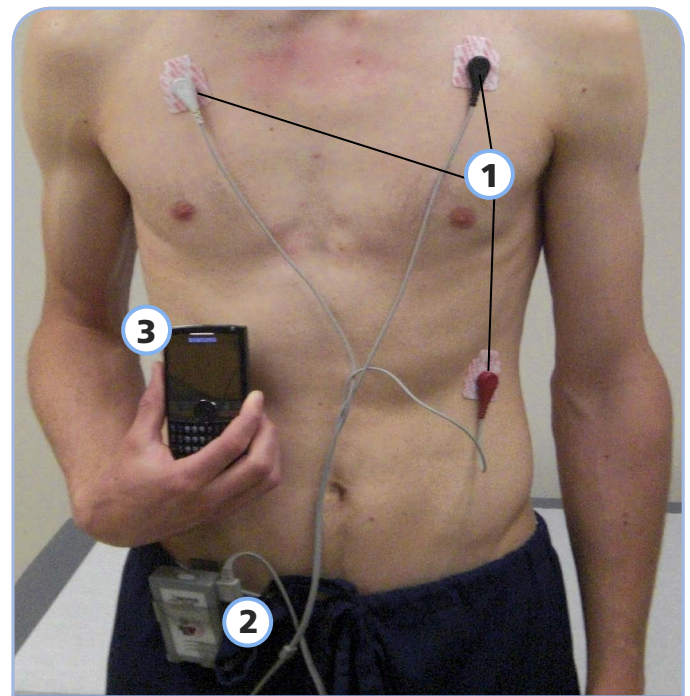
## How will I get the results?

A doctor will review your information, and you will get the results in a follow-up appointment.

## Talking with your doctor about ambulatory telemetry

The table below lists the most common potential benefits, risks, and alternatives for ambulatory telemetry. Other benefits and risks may apply to your unique situation. Talking with your doctor is the best way to learn about the risks and benefits. If you have questions, be sure to ask.

<b>Possible benefits</b>	This test can help your doctor diagnose heart rhythm problems.
<b>Possible risks and complications</b>	<b>Ambulatory telemetry poses practically no risk.</b> Some people can have minor skin irritation from the sticky patches on the chest.
<b>Alternatives</b>	Other heart rhythm tests include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EKG (electrocardiogram)</li> <li>• Cardiac stress tests</li> <li>• Electrophysiology (EP) study</li> </ul>



## How ambulatory telemetry works

- 1 Small patches called **electrodes** are placed on your chest.
- 2 The electrodes are attached to a **telemetry monitor** (small heart monitor) that you wear on your waistband or belt and records your heartbeat all the time.
- 3 A **wireless communicator** collects the information from the monitor and sends it to the medical center where it can be viewed by a heart specialist.

## My follow-up appointment

Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

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