

## TRANSESOPHAGEAL ECHOCARDIOGRAPHY TEE TESTING

A Transesophageal echocardiogram (or TEE) is ordered by your doctor, whenever a very detailed view of your heart is needed. A traditional echocardiogram does not provide the close-up view that the TEE provides, and cannot diagnose certain conditions. A TEE can be ordered alone, or in combination with other tests or procedures, depending on your specific needs.

Please let us know if you have a history of ulcers, have a hiatus hernia, have problems swallowing, or have any allergies to medications. Let us know if you have had any problems with sedatives in the past.

Before the test, you should not eat or drink for 4-6 hours. You may take your prescribed medications with a sip of water during the fasting period. If you have other procedures or tests with the TEE, you may be given additional instructions.

During the TEE, a cardiologist will give you a mild sedative through an IV, and spray your throat with a numbing anesthetic. The doctor will then insert a small flexible tube (about the size of your index finger) into your mouth, and pass it down your esophagus (the esophagus connects your mouth to your stomach). While in the esophagus, the end of the tube will be right next to the back of the heart. The tube then can be repositioned to look at various parts of the heart and narrow in on specific areas. You may be able to feel the doctor adjust the tube, but it should not be painful or interfere with breathing.

The end of the tube has a probe that can produce sound waves. The sound waves are directed at the heart at different angles and will produce pictures on a monitor that are very detailed. A recording

of the pictures is made during the test. You will not experience any sensations when the sound waves are being produced by the probe. You will be on a continuous heart monitor during the procedure, and staff members will also monitor your pulse, blood pressure and breathing, before, during and after the procedure.

This test usually lasts about 20-40 minutes. Please allow 1-2 hours after the procedure for your recovery. You will be drowsy after the procedure, so have someone available to drive you home. You will not be able to eat, or drink, until you are fully awake, and your throat is no longer numb.

If you experience any throat soreness afterwards, you may use throat lozenges or cool drinks to soothe it. Also please report any unusual symptoms, such as bleeding, internal pain or a stiff neck to your doctor. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our office.