Transesophageal Echocardiogram (TEE)
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What is Transesophageal Echocardiogram (TEE)?

- This test uses sound waves (ultrasound) to take pictures of your heart.
- This test shows the size and shape of your heart, its movement, and how blood flows through it.
- During this test, a special probe is used. This probe is on the end of a flexible tube that is passed through your mouth, down your throat, and into your stomach.
- This special probe lets us get clearer pictures of your heart than with a regular echocardiogram.
- You will be given medications to help you relax and tolerate the probe.

Outpatients: To prepare for this test, you must review and follow the detailed instructions on pages 2-5 of this guide.
Who will do the test?
The test will be done by a cardiologist (heart specialist) with the help of a cardiac sonographer (heart ultrasound specialist). Sometimes a resident doctor also helps.

If you are an Outpatient:
Please make sure you know which site your test is at, as TEEs are done at 2 different sites:

- **Halifax Infirmary:**
  - Report to Level 4, Registration Kiosk, Main Entrance, Robie Street.
  - Proceed directly to the Minor Procedures Clinic to get ready for your test.
  - You will then be taken to the Echo Lab for your test.

- **Dartmouth General:**
  - Report to Patient Registration, Main Entrance.
How do I get ready for the test?

• Do not eat or drink anything for 6 hours before your test.

• If you are taking medication, you may take it with a small amount of water.

• If you take insulin for diabetes, you need instructions about how to take insulin on the day of the test.

• Three weekdays before the test date, call the doctor who arranged the test for insulin instructions.

• If you take the blood thinners warfarin or coumadin, have your INR (blood test) checked the day before your test. If your TEE is on a Monday, have your blood test on the Friday before.
How is the test done?

• You will be asked to gargle with a solution that will freeze your throat and take away your gag response.

• A spray may be used instead of, or in addition to, the gargle solution.

• You will be given an injection which will help you to relax and make you drowsy. It will not put you completely to sleep.

• The doctor will then pass the probe through a plastic mouth guard into your mouth, through your esophagus, and into your stomach.

• We will ask you to swallow to help move the probe down your throat.

• Once the probe is in the right position, the doctor will be able to see your heart on the computer screen. Various measurements and analysis will be done with the computer.

• The test will take about 60 minutes.
After the test: Outpatients

- You will be taken back to the area where you reported. You will be assessed/monitored for about 1 hour after the test.
- You should not have anything to eat or drink until your throat is no longer frozen and your gag response has returned. This will be about 2-3 hours after your test.
- A responsible adult (someone you know) must take you home and stay with you until you are no longer drowsy.
- You cannot travel home by bus or taxi.
- You must not drive your car, operate any dangerous equipment, or make any important decisions for 24 hours after your test because the freezing solution can affect your reflexes and reaction time.

If you have any questions, please ask.
We are here to help you.