

24-Hour ECG

What is a 24-hour ECG and why would I need this?

This test is a way of continuously recording your heart rhythm and the heart's electrical activity over a period of time. The tests can help diagnose various symptoms that do not happen very often or have not previously been picked up by an ECG (heart tracing). The heart produces tiny electrical impulses which cause the heart muscle to contract. These impulses can be detected and recorded by an ECG. This test may be recommended to help diagnose symptoms such as palpitations, dizzy spells or black outs.

What are the potential risks and side effects?

There are no known risks involved with having an ECG. Occasionally some people have an allergic reaction to the sticky patches placed on their skin. You should inform the staff if you are allergic to Elastoplast.

Preparing for your test

You can take all your medications as usual and eat and drink as normal. The monitor will take approximately 10-15 minutes to fit. If you have a PACEMAKER fitted, please be sure to tell the Cardiac Physiologist before they put the monitor on.

How is it done?

Sticky patches are placed on your chest and attached by wires to a small tape recorder which you wear on a belt or clip around your waist, or around your neck. The recorder will continuously record your heart rhythm. You will not be able to feel anything as this happens. You will be asked to keep a diary or an activity log while you are wearing the ECG recorder and make a note of any times you have symptoms. The test will take approximately 10-15 minutes on the day you have the Portable ECG Recorder fitted.

Can I continue with normal activities whilst wearing the ECG recorder?

Keep to your normal routine and do any activity that would normally bring on your symptoms. You must avoid getting a bath or a shower as you must not get the recorder wet.

What happens next?

You will need to return the monitor to us the following day as instructed. We ask that you remove the monitor yourself and place it in the envelope we have provided. It is very important that the device is returned within the agreed time to enable us to consider the results of your recording and determine your future treatment. We have a large number of patients waiting for these devices so returning the monitor on time is essential in order for another patient to receive treatment.

Returning the device

Please ensure you have made plans to return your device the following day after fitting. If you will not be able to return the monitor, please rearrange your appointment.

If you had the tape fitted at Conquest: please drop it off in the envelope provided, at Conquest Cardiology reception, Level 2, during the week. If you are returning the device at the weekend please return to James ward, Level 2.

If you had the tape fitted at Eastbourne DGH: please drop it off in the envelope provided, at Eastbourne Cardiology reception, Green Zone Level 3. Please place the envelope in the box labelled **Cardiac Monitor Box**.

If devices are not returned to us the individual may be liable to pay for the cost incurred to the Trust which may be up to £2500.

Consent

Although you consent for this test, you may at any time after that withdraw such consent. Please discuss this with your medical team.

Important information

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the patient experience team on 0300 131 4784 or esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net.

Hand hygiene

We are committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other formats

If you require any of our leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department on 0300 131 4434 or esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:
Julie Lovell – Principal Cardiac Physiologist

The directorate group that has agreed this patient information leaflet: Medicine

Next review date: January 2027
Responsible clinician/author: Julie Lovell – Principal Cardiac Physiologist

© East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust – www.esht.nhs.uk