



Understanding Your Cardiovascular Ultrasound

Echocardiography

Ultrasound uses high frequency sound waves to diagnose medical conditions, including those that affect the heart and arteries. An echocardiogram is a safe, painless diagnostic procedure that uses ultrasound to take moving pictures of the heart.

These pictures enable your physician to measure the four chambers of the heart, study the appearance and motion of the valves and assess how effectively the heart pumps blood through the heart, to the lungs and the rest of your body.

A Doppler echocardiogram may also be performed. This test is used to record the speed, amount and direction of the blood flowing through the heart and vessels and identifies any narrowing or leaking of the valves or holes between the heart's pumping chambers.

Vascular Ultrasound

Vascular ultrasound is an important tool used to measure the blood flow in specific blood vessels. There are different types of vascular ultrasound exams.

Carotid Duplex

This exam evaluates the carotid arteries located in the neck. These vessels bring blood to the brain.

Abdominal Vascular Duplex

This ultrasound exam evaluates the aorta, which bring blood to your abdomen. For this exam, you must fast after midnight.

Ankle brachial Index (ABI)

This exam is an effective tool in screening for peripheral vascular disease. Lying on an exam table or reclining in a chair, blood pressure cuffs will be placed on your ankles and upper arms. When inflated, the cuffs will provide blood pressure readings and waveforms. These readings will reveal any areas of blockages within the arteries. To further evaluate the leg arteries, additional pressure measurements will be done after a brief walk on a treadmill.

Your test will take place at:

North Shore Physicians Group

You are scheduled for an appointment for _____

Your appointment is scheduled on

_____ at _____ a.m./ p.m.

____ Special preparation is not needed.

____ Special preparation is needed. Prior to your exam you must fast (please do not eat after midnight).

Please see the reserve side for important information about your test.



NORTH SHORE
Physicians Group
Cardiovascular Medicine

During Your Exam

Our diagnostic cardiac sonographer will perform your exam, which may take 30 to 60 minutes. You will be given a gown to change into prior to the test and will then be asked to lie on the ultrasound table. The ultrasound wand (called a transducer) will be placed directly on your chest or upper abdomen for the examination. You may be asked to hold your breath for short periods throughout the exam. This ensures that the lungs remain out of the way of the ultrasound beam and moves the heart closer to the transducer.

Small adhesive patches and harmless wires may also be attached to your chest to record electrical activity in your heart. The cardiac ultrasound does not cause any pain nor have any lasting effects.

The day of your exam

Please arrive 15 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment for registration.

Late arrivals may need to be rescheduled. After your exam, you are free to return to your daily activities.

