

Community Cardiology Contact Details

Call 01704 395 800 to speak with us regarding your referral.

107 Liverpool Road, Birkdale, Southport, PR8 4DB
(The Family Surgery building)



Southport
& Formby
Health



Echocardiogram (Echo)



Ultrasound scan of the heart

Caring for our community

This leaflet has been written to provide information about a test that allows a Physiologist (a specially trained technician) to examine your heart using ultrasound waves (Echocardiogram).

We hope it answers some of the questions or concerns you may have about the test.

What is an Echocardiogram?

An Echocardiogram (Echo) is a test that allows a Physiologist to examine the structure of your heart and the heart valves using ultrasound waves.

How is it done?

The test involves placing gel on your chest and moving a probe over your chest area. High frequency sound is passed through your skin. The probe then picks up echoes and shows them as a moving picture of your heart on a screen.

Will I have any pain or discomfort during the test?

The test is completely painless.

How long does it take?

The test can take up to 30 minutes.

Do I need to prepare for the test in any way?

No. You can eat and drink normally before the test. You will be required to undress to the waist, but you will be given a gown to wear.

Please note - if possible wear a two piece outfit and avoid wearing a dress or slip e.g. skirt or trousers and a top. If you would like a chaperone during your exam please inform the clinician.

What are the benefits of having the test?

The test will provide your doctor with important information about your heart muscle and the heart valves. It is often useful to assess the function of the heart after a heart attack, to assess people with heart failure and to routinely assess people with disease of the heart valves.

Are there any risks involved?

The use of ultrasound to obtain images of the heart is very safe and there are no known risks.

What alternatives do I have?

Your doctor will be happy to discuss any alternative tests if they are applicable to you.

What can I expect after the test?

Once the test is over you will be able to go home. The results of the test will be sent to the referring clinician e.g. your GP or consultant.

It is very important that you attend your appointment. If you are unable to attend, please provide enough notice as we have a large number of patients waiting for these appointments.