



Cardiac Ultrasound Consumer Information Sheet

Introduction

Ultrasound uses sound waves to produce images. The sound waves are transmitted into your body from a small handpiece that looks a bit like a microphone (called an Ultrasound Probe). Some of these waves are reflected and are processed by the ultrasound machine to form pictures. This is the same way the navy looks for submarines. These pictures are shown on a TV screen and recorded.

Ultrasound has been around for about 60 years now and studies have shown that it is a safe technique with no harmful side effects.

Depending on the type of examination you are having you may need some preparation. You may be asked to change into a gown. The examination will be performed by a Paediatric Cardiologist.

You will be shown into the ultrasound room and asked to either lie down on a couch or sit on a chair. A warmed jelly like substance is then placed on your skin on to the area of interest. The sound waves don't travel through air so this allows transmission of the sound waves into your body. The probe produces sound waves that will form the images. You will be completely unaware of these sound waves and there should be no discomfort during the examination apart from a little pressure.

You may be asked to hold your breath - this is very important because when you breathe the organs go up and down in the tummy. When you hold your breath the organs stay still allowing the sonographer can get a better view of them.

Preparation

- No specific preparation is required for a heart ultrasound.
- A standard scan takes approximately 20 minutes and will be performed during the 45 minute consultation

Results

Your scan will be reported by a Paediatric Cardiologist. The results will be discussed with you on the day and a plan made for any ongoing follow-up or further referral on to other specialist Paediatric Cardiologists if required. The report along with the letter from the consultation will then be sent to the person who referred you.

Reference documents:	DoHA Practice Accreditation Standards 2 nd edition: 2.2
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