



Electrocardiogram (EKG/ECFG)

What is an electrocardiogram?

An Electrocardiogram is a painless, non-invasive test whereby the doctor evaluates the heart's function by viewing its electrical activity.

What is an EKG for?

An EKG is done to:

- Find the cause of unexplained chest pain, such as a heart attack, inflammation of the sac surrounding the heart (pericarditis), or reduced blood flow to the heart muscle (ischemia).
- Find the cause of symptoms of heart disease, such as unexplained chest pain, shortness of breath, dizziness, fainting, or rapid, irregular heartbeats (palpitations).
- Check the heart's electrical activity.
- Find out if the walls of the heart chambers are too thick (hypertrophied).
- Check how well medicines are working and whether they are causing side effects that affect the heart.
- Check how well mechanical devices, such as pacemaker or defibrillators implanted in the heart, are working to control a normal heartbeat.
- Check the health of the heart when other diseases or conditions are present, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, cigarette smoking, diabetes, or a family history of early heart disease.

How do I prepare for the test?

Many medicines may change the results of this test. Be sure to tell your doctor about all the nonprescription and prescription medicines you take. If you take heart medicines, your doctor will tell you how to take your medicines before you have this test. Remove all jewelry from your neck, arms, and wrists. Men are usually bare-chested during the test. Women may often wear a bra, T-shirt, or gown. If you are wearing stockings, you should take them off. You will be given a cloth or paper covering to use during the test.

What happens during the procedure?

An EKG technician will place a total of approximately 10 disposable electrode patches on the skin of your arms, legs and chest (sometimes it is necessary to shave small areas of body hair in order to get a good reading). These electrode patches are hooked up to an Electrocardiography machine, which displays the electrical activity of your heart. You will lie on a bed or table. You will be asked to lie very still and breathe normally during the test. You should not talk during the test.

This test can give your doctor the following information about the functioning of your heart:

- Heart attack: EKGs show whether you are currently having a heart attack or have had one in the past and can help differentiate between chest pain (angina) and a heart attack.
- Heart rate and rhythm: EKGs exhibit how fast or slow your heart is beating, and if the beats are regular or irregular.
- Heart structure: EKGs indicate the size and configuration of the heart, and possibly any defects you may have been born with.



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How long does the test take?

This test takes approximately five minutes.

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We offer services to both the pediatric and adult population on an outpatient and inpatient basis. Our hours of operation are 6:00am to 9:00pm Monday through Friday and 7:00 am to 9:00pm Saturday and Sunday.

To schedule an appointment call Central Scheduling at 781.979.7111

