



## Transesophageal Echocardiogram (TEE)

### What is a Transesophageal Echocardiogram (TEE)?

A TEE is an ultrasound study used to view the heart's anatomy and function, specifically, to visualize a detailed image of the heart's movement, valves, and chambers. A transducer that emits high-frequency sound waves is placed into your mouth and into the esophagus, which is the tube that connects the mouth to the stomach. This location is closer to the heart (the esophagus lies directly behind the heart), and allows a real-time view of the heart that has much less interference from the chest wall and lungs than routine echocardiography.

### What is a TEE for?

Transesophageal echocardiogram (TEE) may be done to:

- Monitor heart function during surgery.
- Check how well an artificial heart valve works.
- Look for masses or blood clots in the upper chambers of the heart.
- Identify abnormal blood flow between the chambers of the heart (cardiac shunt).
- Help find out if you have endocarditis.
- Help find out if you have a tear in the aorta (aortic dissection).

### How do I prepare for a TEE?

You are asked not to eat or drink anything after midnight the night before the test. The morning of the test, you may take your medications with small sips of water. It will be necessary to have a driver take you home.

### What happens during the procedure?

When you arrive for the test, the cardiologist will explain the procedure to you and will discuss any questions you may have. An intravenous (IV) line will be placed in your arm for the sedatives that will be given to you during the procedure. For the test, the patient is hooked up to several monitors, they gargle a solution that numbs the throat (or the throat is sprayed with a numbing medicine), and they receive a sedative intravenously. Then a tube called a transducer probe is passed thru the mouth, into the esophagus, and the ultrasound pictures are taken. The transducer probe is removed, and the patient rests until both the sedative and the throat numbing medicine wear off. As stated before, your throat will be numbed with medication to make the procedure more comfortable. During the procedure, you will be monitored closely while the ultrasound images are obtained.

### How long does this procedure take?

The test lasts approximately 30-45 minutes.



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## What happens after the procedure?

After the procedure, you will remain in the procedure room until you are fully awake. You may be drowsy for a period of time following the procedure. You may or may not have a sore throat. You will be asked not to eat or drink anything for two hours after the procedure, until the numbing wears off. After two hours, you may eat soft foods, but avoid hot liquids. We ask that a family member or friend accompany you so that he/she can drive you home. You are not to drive yourself due to the sedative medications. We recommend that you not drive or perform any physically strenuous activities for the remainder of the day.

**Melrose-Wakefield Hospital**  
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**To schedule an appointment call Central Scheduling at 781.979.7111**

