

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS:

**Transoesophageal echocardiography TOE
(heart ultrasound through the oesophagus)**

1. What is transoesophageal echocardiography?

TOE is an examination in which the cardiologist performs an echocardiogram through the oesophagus. This can provide important additional information about the heart in the context of specific concerns (e.g. circulatory disorders of the brain or certain heart valve disorders), which is not the case with conventional ultrasound from the outside through the chest wall.

2. How is the TOE carried out?

First, a cannula is inserted into a vein in the arm or hand. Removable dentures are removed at this point. A spray of a local anesthetic is given as pharyngeal anesthesia. The anesthetic desensitises the mucous membrane of the throat inhibiting the gag reflex. It also affects normal swallowing. Generally a sedative is then injected, which puts the patient into a short sleep. If the patient does not want a sedative, they must make this known before the examination. Then, similar to the endoscope for a gastroscopy, the tube-shaped ultrasound device is pushed through the mouth, through the pharynx and the oesophagus to the entrance of the stomach (see figures below). As the device is being inserted, the patient should swallow one or more times on the instruction of the doctor. The patient receives a ring shaped plastic mouthpiece between the teeth to protect the device from damage, which they should bite down on. The heart examination then takes place as the tube is slowly retracted. The examination takes about 15 minutes. Depending on the problem, the injection of saline or a contrast agent (Sonovue®) may be required.

3. How should I prepare for the examination?

Do not eat or drink for at least 4 hours before the examination. On the day of the examination, take all medications as usual with the exception of diabetes medication. If you have questions, ask your doctor well in advance of the examination. If you are taking blood-thinning medications (eg Sintrom, Pradaxa, Xarelto, Eliquis, Clexane or other heparin syringes), please make this known before the examination.

4. What should I do after the examination?

Because of the pharyngeal anaesthesia, do not eat or drink for one hour after the examination, or until the numbness in the throat has gone, whichever is longer.

If you have received a sedative, which is usually the case, you must not drive the same day. For this reason, please organise a lift before the examination.

If you experience any complaints after the examination, please inform your cardiologist immediately.

5. Are there risks involved in TOE?

Serious complications are very rare for this examination. Injuries to the mouth, throat, oesophagus and stomach may occur. Please indicate loose teeth before the examination. Complications can also arise from the medications, which are also only rarely dangerous. In order to minimise these risks, please follow the advice under 8. All preparations have been made for immediate treatment should such an incident occur.

PTO

6. Date of examination:

___ / ___ / 20___ : ___

7. Location of examination:

Center Hospitalier du Nord
120, Avenue Salentiny, L-9080 Ettelbruck, Cardiologie

8. Important note:

Please report any intolerances/allergies to medication before the examination as well as any previous complications in diagnostic or therapeutic procedures!



Image source: www.klinikum-nuernberg.de



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