

Cardiac Ultrasound Transoesophageal Echocardiogram

Information for patients,
relatives and carers





This leaflet explains what to expect when you come to hospital for a Transoesophageal Echocardiogram which is sometimes called a TOE. We hope it will answer some of the questions that you or those who care for you may have.

A patient information video about TOE is also available at the following links:



www.explainmyprocedure.com/leeds/qr/toe/

A password may be required to activate the link, please contact the department if you require this.

What is a transoesophageal echocardiogram?

A transoesophageal echocardiogram (TOE) is heart scan that uses ultrasound (soundwaves) to produce images of the heart.

It involves swallowing a soft flexible tube as the pictures are taken via the gullet. A TOE allows your Doctor to take extremely detailed images of your heart, it is often used to look carefully at the valves and the structure of the heart.

The TOE will help the Doctor decide on the best treatment for your heart.

What does the procedure involve?

A TOE is performed as a day-case. Three people will usually be present to perform the scan: a Doctor, a Sonographer and a nurse/assistant.

You will have stickers attached, so that your heart rate can be monitored throughout the scan. You will also have your blood pressure checked, and be given oxygen. You will be able to breathe completely normally throughout the test.

You will have some local anaesthetic sprayed on the back of your throat and then lie on your left hand side. A drip will be placed in your arm. If you have dentures or glasses, you will be asked to remove them before the test.

Often, you will then be given some sedation to relax you, although you will not be completely asleep. You will then be asked to swallow the TOE probe. This part may cause discomfort, but is not painful.

Recorded images of the heart will then be obtained. The test will take about 20 minutes. At the end of the procedure, the tube will be removed; your blood pressure will be checked again, and you will have a short period of recovery.

After the TOE, you will be monitored; when you are fully alert and the sensation has returned to your throat, you may try a cold drink.

You will be allowed home when you are fully awake, usually 2-3 hours after the procedure. Before you are discharged, the results of the scan will be explained to you.

If you have been given sedation, you should NOT drive or operate heavy machinery for the remainder of the day. You should be accompanied home by a friend or relative. You can go back to normal activities the following day.

Are there any precautions that I need to take beforehand?

You must NOT eat or drink anything for six hours before the test. Normal medications should be taken on the morning of the TOE with a small sip of water. Please bring a copy of your prescription with you. If you are diabetic, please inform the nurses as soon as you arrive at the Day Care unit. If you are on Warfarin, your INR should have been checked within the preceding seven days.

Please inform your Doctor if you have any problems with swallowing, or if you have had any bleeding from your stomach. This may prevent the TOE from being performed.

Are there any risks associated with this procedure?

The TOE scan is extremely safe, but there are some risks you need to be aware of.

It is not uncommon to have a sore throat after the procedure. This may last for a day or two. Occasionally the throat may bruise or bleed slightly.

There is a small chance of inhaling stomach contents during the procedure. This is why it is important that you do NOT eat or drink anything for six hours before the procedure.

There is an extremely small risk (less than 1 in 10,000) of damaging or tearing the gullet. In extreme circumstances this may require an operation to repair the damage. Your Doctor would not be requesting the TOE unless he or she felt it would help in deciding on the best treatment for your heart.

If you have any questions regarding the TOE please contact your Doctor's secretary, or this unit.

If you need to change your appointment

If you need to cancel or reschedule your appointment please contact the department on these numbers:

Leeds General Infirmary

0113 392 2569

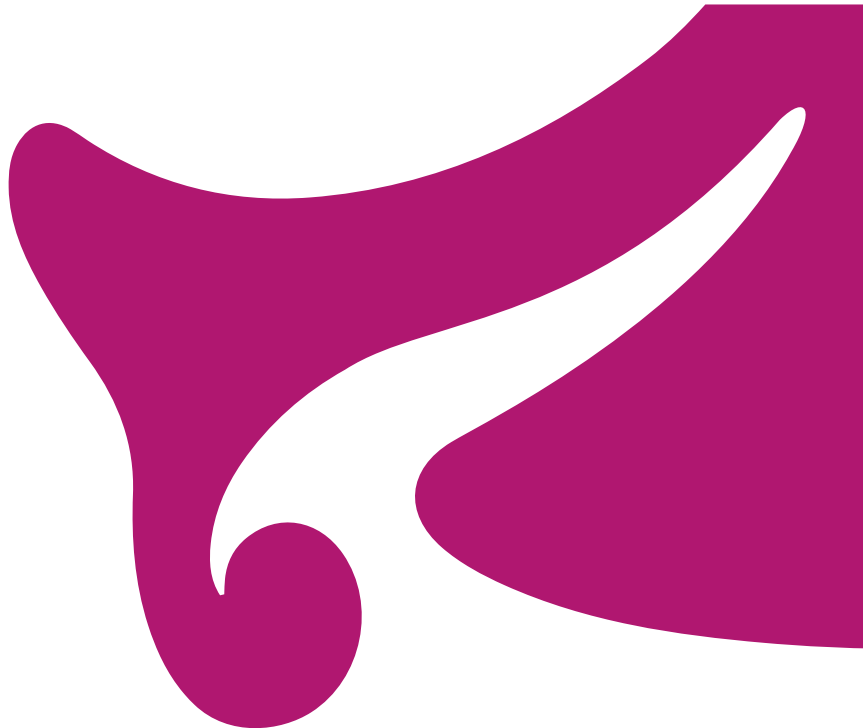
St James Hospital, Seacroft Hospital and Wharfedale Hospital

0113 206 5930 or 0113 206 4759

For more information about outpatient appointments at The Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust hold your smartphone camera over the QR code and follow the link.

Speech, reading and translation support tools are available on this link.





What did you think of your care?

Scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/nhsleedsfft

Your views matter



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