

CARDIAC INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES

The Cardiac Investigation Department offers Direct GP Access for ECG's, 24hr Ambulatory ECG's & BP monitors, 7 day Event Recorders, Exercise Testing and Echocardiography. We also offer the same range of investigations for in-patients and out-patients from Kingston Hospital and additionally: Pacemaker/ICD checks, 7 day Event Recorders and Contrast Echocardiography.

The department offers a physiologist reporting service for all tests (with the exclusion of exercise tests performed as part of a Rapid Access Chest Pain Clinic where the results are reviewed by the Clinical Nurse Specialist as part of the clinic).

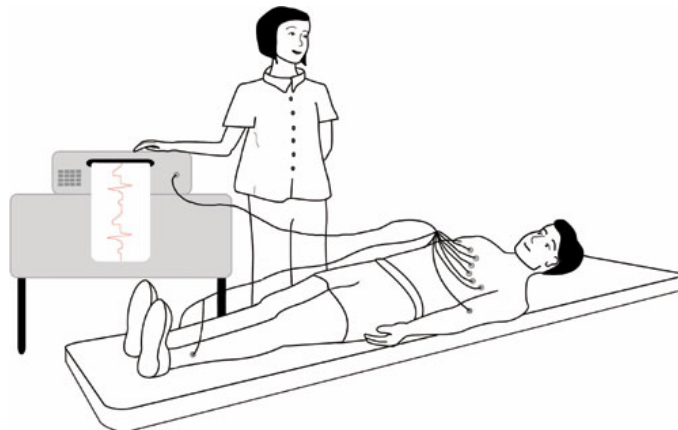
Please note that we do not offer a paediatric service for any of these tests

ECG Service

The ECG Department GP direct access service is available from Monday to Friday between the hours of **10.00 - 12.00 and 14.00 – 16.00**. This is a walk-in service and patients should take a numbered ticket from the reception desk on arrival. There is no waiting list and we do not schedule appointments for this test. The test will be undertaken during this visit to the department and are **Physiologist Reported** (when report requested) and the ECG tracing returned with the patient.

What is an ECG (electrocardiogram)

Electrical leads from the ECG machine are connected to the chest, legs and arms via electrodes and a 3 second recording is made of the electrical activity of the heart.

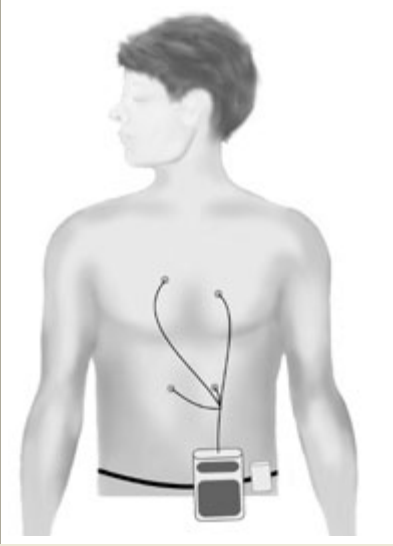


24 Hour Ambulatory ECG Service

24 hour tapes are fitted by appointment only from Monday to Friday between the hours of 9am and 4pm. Please note that without a request form the test cannot be performed. The tape is fitted on the day of appointment and must be returned the following day. It can be left at the Main Reception of the hospital if it is a weekend. The tape will be analysed and reported on by a physiologist and then returned to the referring doctor by post within 10 working days.

Holter

The Holter monitor is attached by 4 or more electrical leads to your body. It monitors your heart's electrical activity (ECG) over a period of time (usually 24hrs and therefore referred to as a 24hr tape).



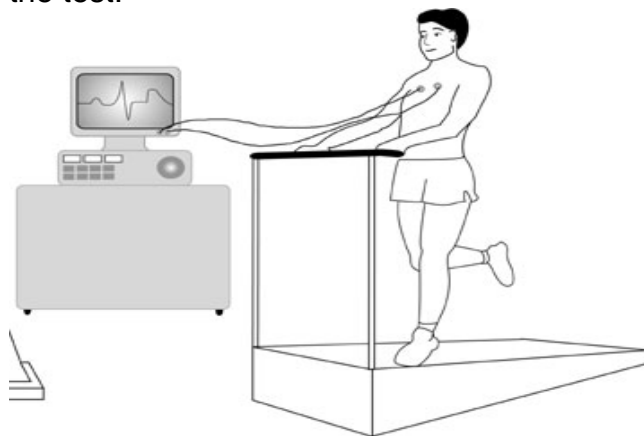
What information can we get from a holter recording that we can't get from an ECG?

A holter monitor records your ECG over a period of time (usually 24hrs) whereas the ECG is only for 3 seconds. The holter allows us to investigate your heart's rhythm whilst you are going about your daily activities. It can capture 'events' that you are unaware of and intermittent (paroxysmal) changes.

Sometimes, symptoms and events occur even more infrequently than during a 24hr period. In this instance it can be useful to use an 'event recorder'. This is very similar to a holter monitor but can be worn for a longer period of time (usually 7 days) and can often be activated to record by the patient if they have symptoms.

Exercise Testing Service

Exercise tests are performed Monday and Friday between the hours of 9am and 12pm. Exercise Tests are also performed as part of the Rapid Access Chest Pain Clinic. Please note that these tests are by appointment only and without a request form the test cannot be performed. The physiologists report on the Exercise Test on the day it is performed and, if requested by the GP, will give the patient a copy of the report to return to their GP. All other reports are returned by post, to the referring doctor, within 10 working days. Patient should wear comfortable clothing and not eat a large meal close to the time of the test.



What is an Exercise Test?

Electrical leads from the ECG machine are connected to the patient's body and they are monitored while exercising on a treadmill. The patient's ECG, blood pressure and symptoms are all monitored while they exercise and for a period of recovery time following exercise.

Echocardiography Service

Echocardiograms are performed Monday to Friday between the hours of 9am and 5pm by appointment only. A physiologist report is posted to the referring doctor within 5 working days. This test cannot be performed without a referral form.

What is an Echocardiogram?

The operator puts some clear gel on the patient's chest and then places an ultrasound probe on it. The probe sends ultrasound beams into the body and their reflections are detected and used to generate images of the heart. Different parts of the heart are seen on a screen as the probe is moved around on the chest. The test is similar to the ultrasound scan that is used to examine a pregnant woman's unborn baby. **It is completely painless.**

