

ECG – Electrocardiogram

What is an ECG?

- An electrocardiogram (ECG) records the electrical activity of the heart. The heart produces tiny electrical impulses which spread through the heart muscle to make the heart contract. These impulses can be detected by the ECG machine. You may have an ECG to help find the cause of symptoms such as palpitations or chest pain.

How is it performed?

- Small electrodes are stuck on to your arms, legs and chest. Wires from the electrodes are connected to the ECG machine. The machine detects and amplifies the electrical impulses that occur at each heartbeat and records them. A few heartbeats are recorded from different sets of electrodes. The test takes about 10-15 minutes to do.
- Your chest area, shins and wrists will need to be exposed throughout the procedure so loose/easy to remove garments would be best to wear.

What does an ECG show?

An ECG can help detect:

- arrhythmias – where the heart beats too slowly, too quickly, or irregularly
- coronary heart disease – where the heart's blood supply is blocked or interrupted by a build-up of fatty substances
- heart attacks – where the supply of blood to the heart is suddenly blocked
- cardiomyopathy – where the heart walls become thickened or enlarged

How to organise an ECG?

- To book an ECG you can call reception or book at the desk and ask to be booked in. They are carried out by one of our HCAs. Please specify if you would prefer a male or female HCA.

What happens next?

- The HCA will show your ECG report to a G.P there and then. The GP will then decide the next step.