

ELECTROCARDIOGRAM (ECG OR EKG)

An electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG) is a test to evaluate the electrical activity of the heart. A resting ECG is often performed in the doctor's office as part of a routine physical. It takes about 10 minutes and provides some basic information about the heart such as presence of unusual rhythms, electrolyte imbalance, enlargement of the heart chambers, or evidence of a prior heart attack. The resting ECG is not good at predicting future problems, only obtaining information about past or current conditions.

Procedure:

- Adhesive electrodes are attached to the chest, arms and legs.
- A heart monitor detects and measures electrical impulses, which are recorded graphically on a continuous strip of paper.
- The physician then interprets the record.

Risks:

This is a non-invasive test with virtually no risks or discomfort.