

## INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Your physician has recommended that you have transesophageal echocardiography (TEE), a test utilizing ultrasound transmitted from a small transducer positioner within your esophagus (the tube between your mouth and stomach), immediately behind your heart. This technique allows clear and precise visualization of several structures within your heart which are not well visualized by other modalities.

## SAFETY

This test is remarkably safe. Complications are both rare and minor. However, if you have severe asthma, glaucoma or a tendency to dangerous arrhythmias, the dosage of some of the medications used to prepare you for this test may need to be adjusted. If you have a prior history of any of these problems, or if you have had any previous difficulties in swallowing, you should report these to your physician or your nurse prior to the test.

## PREPARATION FOR TEE

1. Do not eat or drink anything (except your usual medications with a sip of water) for 6-8 hours before.
2. Bring a list of your current medications with you.
3. Bring someone with you who will be able to wait for you or return to drive you home.  
(You will be finished about 2-3 hours after you arrive).

## AFTER YOUR TEE

1. Do not eat or drink anything (**especially hot things**) until the numbness in your throat is gone.
2. Do not drive or operate dangerous equipment for 8-10 hours after your TEE.
3. Attend the follow up visit scheduled by Heart Clinic staff.
4. Please call Southern Oregon Cardiology at **541-282-6606** if you have any questions about the TEE procedure either prior to or after your test.

## THE TEE PROCEDURE

This test is accomplished by having you swallow a tube containing a tiny ultrasound transducer. Since the transducer is about the size of a peanut, swallowing it can be transiently uncomfortable and may produce a lot of saliva. During the swallowing, you may transiently (a few seconds) feel some mild discomfort, a brief sense of gagging and an awareness of some mild shortness of breath. A few slow, deep breaths usually suffice and the tube is quickly positioned, after which you will be comfortable and probably sleep for the remainder of the procedure. You are welcome to watch the pictures on a nearby television screen. Should you choose to nap, have no worries as your vital functions are being carefully monitored. Following completion of the test, you may continue to feel sleepy and a bit dry in the mouth for several minutes, but you should quickly be able to leave (on your own power) within an hour. Nonetheless, your reactions to stimuli may remain a bit slow for 8-10 hours and thus, we strongly suggest that you not drive or operate potentially dangerous equipment during this time period. The back of your throat may remain numb for an hour or two after the procedure, so please avoid drinking or eating until you can "feel" normal sensation there.