



**University
Hospitals Sussex**
NHS Foundation Trust

Having an electrocardiogram or ECG

Cardiology

Patient information

What is this information about?

This information is about having an electrocardiogram, or ECG. It tells you about what the ECG records, what happens during an ECG, and what happens after the ECG. This includes getting your results.

Why have I been given this information?

You have been given this information because your doctor has referred you to have an ECG. This is to check that your heart is healthy, and to see if there is anything that is not working as it should be.

What is an Electrocardiogram or ECG?

An Electrocardiogram is also called an ECG. It is a diagnostic test that records the electrical activity of your heart. It gives information about your heart's rhythm, and rate. It also gives information about the electrical system in your heart.

Why do I need an Electrocardiogram?

ECGs are performed to detect various heart conditions. These include irregular heart rhythms (also called arrhythmias), heart attacks, abnormalities (things that aren't right) in the heart's structure, and other problems with the heart.

What does an ECG involve?

It is a painless procedure. During an ECG, small electrodes (special stickers and wires) are attached to specific areas on your chest, arms, and legs. These electrodes are connected to an ECG machine that records the electrical signals made by your heart as it beats.

How long does an ECG take?

The test lasts a few minutes. All you have to do is lie still. This helps to make sure that the readings are correct.

Do I need to make any preparations?

You do not need to prepare for an ECG. But it is a good idea to wear loose-fitting clothes so that it is easy to fit the electrodes on your chest, arms and legs. You may be asked to undress from the waist up.

Please tell the cardiac physiologist about any medicines you are taking, or any existing medical conditions. These may affect how the results are read.

What happens after the ECG?

Once the ECG is completed, the information it has collected is looked at by a Cardiac Physiologist. They will read the results and tell the doctor who referred you for the ECG if something isn't right.

When will I receive my results?

The report will be sent to the doctor who referred you for the ECG. They will contact you to discuss the results. If you have any enquiries about your results, please contact the department where the referral was originally made.

Who can I contact for further information and advice about your appointment?

Please contact the booking team on:

01273 696955, Ext: 63619.

This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care in Brighton & Hove or Haywards Heath

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