

Let's Talk About...

Electrocardiogram

An electrocardiogram [ee-leck-troh-CARD-ee-oh-gram] is a test that measures how the heart is working. It is also called an **EKG** or **ECG**. An EKG can show whether or not the electrical system in your child's heart is working right.

What happens during an EKG?

You and your child will go to a private room with the EKG machine. Your child will take off their shirt and an EKG technician will put 13 sticky pads on your child's chest. The EKG technician will respect your child's modesty as much as possible. The pads do not hurt and do not give your child a shock. They just stick to the skin.

During the test, your child will need to hold still. The EKG technician will push the "record" button on the machine, and the machine will print a piece of paper with wavy EKG lines. After the technician takes the sticky pads off, your child can get dressed. The recording takes about 1 minute. The entire test takes less than 10 minutes.

What do I need to know before my child's EKG?

To help your child's EKG technician put the pads on, your child should not have any lotion or baby oil on their chest before the test. These products keep the pads from sticking to the skin the way they should.

Are there any risks I should know about?

The only risk with this test is a possible skin allergy to the sticky substance on the pads. This may cause redness and skin irritation where the pads go on your child's chest. This will go away soon.



How will I find out the results?

Your child's healthcare provider will get the test results and give you the information in a follow-up phone call or visit.

What do kids say about the test?

Here's what other children who have had an EKG said about the test:

- "It felt like nothing."
- "It didn't hurt at all."
- "I had to hold very still."
- "They put lots of stickers on my chest."
- "I got to help take off the stickers when the test was done."
- "I got a picture with my stickers on it to take home!"

Questions for my doctor

Notes

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