

# TESTfacts

An Educational Health Series From National Jewish Health®



## Electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG)

### What is an electrocardiogram?

Your doctor has suggested you have a test called an electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG) to check for an abnormal heart rhythm.

### How do you get ready for the test?

Before the procedure, the health care provider will explain the procedure to you.

- ✓ Wear clothing you can remove from the waist up. You will be given a gown to wear.

### Where do I go to get this test done?

Check in at the main desk for the electrocardiogram.

### What is done during the test?

When you arrive the health care provider will explain what will be done before, during and after the test. If you have any questions, please ask.

You will need to take off your shirt and will be given a gown to wear. Electrodes (small, flat, sticky patches) will be placed on your chest, arms and legs. The electrodes are attached to an electrocardiograph monitor (ECG) that charts your heart's electrical activity. Your skin will be cleaned before the electrodes are placed. Hair on your chest, arms and legs may be shaved before the electrodes are applied to improve the contact between the skin and electrode.

Once the electrodes are in place you will lay still on a bed while the electrocardiogram is completed.

### How long will the test take?

The preparation and electrocardiogram will take about 5-10 minutes.

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