

CARDIAC TESTS: HOLTER MONITORING

PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

What is a Holter monitor?

A Holter monitor is a small portable device that is used to continuously record the electrical activity and rhythm of your heart for twenty-four hours. This test helps your physician to assess for rhythm abnormalities that may occur during your daily activities. Your physician may also order a Holter monitor to assess your heart rate during recurrent symptoms (such as dizziness, palpitations or shortness of breath) or to observe your heart's response to medication.

How is Holter monitoring performed?

Specially trained technicians will apply the Holter monitor.

- Three to five electrodes are placed on your chest and connected to the Holter monitor. The electrodes will be secured with tape. **The electrodes must remain attached at all times for the test to be accurate.**
- The technician will teach you to press a button called an "event marker" when you feel any symptoms. Your physician will use this information to evaluate your heart's activity during symptomatic periods.
- You will be asked to record your activities and any associated symptoms in the Holter monitor diary. Be sure to record all symptoms (dizziness, palpitations, shortness of breath, chest pain) and the exact time that they occurred in your diary.
- When the monitoring period is complete, technicians will remove the monitor. A report of your heart's electrical activity and rhythm is prepared and evaluated by your physician.

What activities can I do while I am wearing a Holter monitor?

Unless your physician has advised otherwise, you may resume your usual activities. This will give your physician an accurate record of your heart's regular electrical activity and rhythm.

Wear loose-fitting clothing to avoid pulling on the electrodes.

- Notify your nurse or physician if an electrode comes off or if the monitor's alarm sounds.
- Keep the monitor and electrodes dry. Postpone bathing or showering until the monitor is removed.
- Press the "event marker" button each time you experience symptoms.

If you have any additional questions about your Holter monitor, please ask your nurse or physician.