

Transthoracic echocardiograms during COVID-19 pandemic

Those with health conditions that may increase risk of COVID-19 comorbidity should seek early advice from occupational health

Establish infection risk of patient (Category 1-3)

Is there a FIT tested sonographer available? (CAT1 and 2)

CAT1: Confirmed
CAT2: Suspected
CAT3: Low risk –either:
 A. Confirmed negative or
 B. No risk factors : new persistent cough / fever / contact with person with symptoms or COVID +VE in last 2 weeks

Ideally use dedicated echo machine
Use dedicated echo gel
Recommend sterile probe cover
 If using portable echo remove from cart and place on a surgical trolley (take power lead)
 Do not take any non essential items (e.g. pens / bleeps / guidelines)

Echo Request
 -Requested by consultant
 - Triage: will echo alter immediate management / can it be deferred? (discuss with cardiologist on call if needed).
 -Plan ahead your scan. What views are key?
 - All requests for repeat echo should be consultant to consultant

Know your trusts infection control policy. Should you have full PPE?
 CAT1 & 2: Recommend full PPE
 CAT3:Recommend fluid resistant surgical mask / plastic apron / gloves

Ideally scan patient at bedside. Clean hands & equipment prior to entering the bay

Minimise patient exposure to non ward staff:
 Is there a suitably accredited clinician /sonographer on the ward of the patient who can undertake some scans?

Aim is to reduce potential exposure of operator to high viral load
 Put on all appropriate PPE before you enter the bay
 Have the patient wear a surgical mask as well
 Aim to reduce scanning time, avoid breath holding

Limit imaging to answer clinical question
A Level 1 BSE scan should be sufficient in most cases (biventricular function and major structural valve disease)
 No ECG. Record time loops. Do not measure during scan.

Keep a secure **departmental log** of patient and sonographer details in case contact tracing is needed.

Finish scan, remove PPE (**follow PPE guidelines**) clean down machine, wash hands & leave the bay to report

If more than one scan to be performed, put **new PPE** on and perform next scan

Upload images and report

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