

## 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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