

## Electrocardiogram (ECG)

### Definition

An ECG records your heart rate (how many beats per minute) and the rhythm of your heart.

It documents the electrical activity which follows a typical pathway. This may be altered by changes to do with the electrical pathways or muscle of your heart (e.g. prior heart attack or reduced blood flow to the heart muscle)

### **Why the Test is Performed**

This test is performed to assess your heart rhythm and electrical pathway

### **How the Test is Conducted**

You will be asked to open your shirt. The doctor or a nurse will place ECG electrodes (sticky patches) on to your chest, arms and legs. The skin may need to be prepared with a very soft sandpaper or chest hair may need to be shaved in small areas to improve the connection between the skin and the electrode. Wires connect the electrodes to an ECG computer. This will monitor the electrical activity during the test.

You will be lying comfortably on an examination bed, with as little movement as possible, whilst the recording is being taken.

### **How to Prepare for the Test**

- Do not apply lotions, oils or powder to the skin
- No other preparation is required

### **Risks**

There is no risk involved with an ECG