



EKG MU Patient Education Series

Definition:

An EKG, electrocardiogram, is a painless test that is used to monitor and observe the workings of your heart. When the heart beats, it is triggered by an electrical impulse and the EKG records these impulses in order to obtain information on your heart's functioning. Your doctor then uses the information from the EKG to observe patterns and to look for various heart diseases and conditions. The results of the EKG can be determined almost immediately and these results can diagnose heart conditions such as heart defects, heart rhythm irregularities, blocked arteries, and heart attacks.

RISKS:

An EKG is a very safe, non-invasive procedure. You may experience slight discomfort when the bandages are put on or taken off, but you can expect little to no pain or discomfort during the test. Very rarely, though, some people react to the electrodes on their skin. Other than that, an EKG is a relatively risk free examination.

THE PROCEDURE ITSELF:

The EKG procedure is typically done in your doctor's office or your local hospital. Your doctor will rarely perform this test him/herself. You will put on a hospital gown and lie down on the examination table. Your technician will then attach about a dozen electrodes, small sticky bandage-like patches, to your arms, chest and legs. The electrodes will detect your heart beat and will conduct the electrical currents. Once you are all set, your doctor will ask you to lie still and they will start the EKG. It will take a few minutes and all you will have to do is lie there and breathe normally.

Depending on the condition your physician is trying to examine, you may have to undergo one of a number of other EKG tests such as a stress test, holster monitoring or an event recorder.

Once the test is complete, your doctor will tell you the results. If the desired results are not determined, your doctor may suggest another type of examination.

DISCLAIMER:

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