Inherited cardiac conditions Information on cardiac screening



NICCS
NETWORK FOR INHERITED CARDIAC CONDITIONS SCOTLAND

This leaflet has been prepared by Public Services Delivery Scotland (PSD Scotland) on behalf of the Network for Inherited Cardiac Conditions Scotland (NICCS). Accountable to Scottish Government, PSD Scotland works at the heart of the health service providing national strategic services to the rest of NHS Scotland and other public sector organisations to help them deliver their services more efficiently and effectively. NICCS is a collaboration of stakeholders involved in care of inherited cardiac conditions who are supported by an PSD Scotland Programme Team to drive improvement across the care pathway.

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What are inherited cardiac conditions?

Inherited cardiac conditions (ICCs) are disorders that run in families and affect the heart muscle, heart rhythm or major blood vessels. Examples include cardiomyopathy, arrhythmia and aortopathy. These conditions affect people of all ages.

What is cardiac screening?

Cardiac screening is used in families where someone may have an inherited condition to understand if they are at risk. These simple tests can show signs of disease which can be treated and prevent complications in future. They can also help doctors interpret screening in another family member.

Depending on the condition that runs in your family, one or more tests may be arranged. The tests will usually take place at your local hospital. During the test, you may need to remove your clothes above your waist.

There is a chance that by having screening another unrelated condition is found, for example high blood pressure. It is your choice if you wish to have cardiac screening.

Cardiac screening - electrocardiogram (ECG)

An electrocardiogram (ECG) is used to check your heart's rhythm and electrical activity.



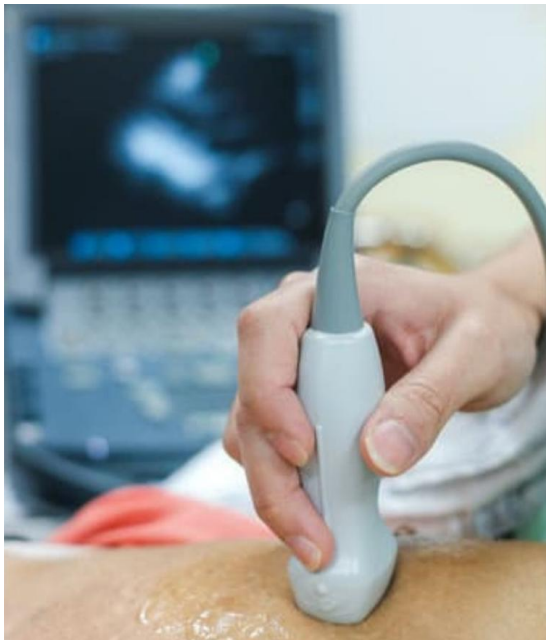
Sensors attached to the skin detect the electrical signals produced by your heart each time it beats. These signals are recorded by a machine and are looked at by a doctor to see if they are unusual.

This test only takes a few minutes.

***Please note that there may be slight differences in how screening is performed from description/images in this leaflet depending on where you attend.**

Cardiac screening - echocardiogram (echo)

An echocardiogram is a type of ultrasound scan used to look at the structure and function of the heart.



A small probe is used to send out high-frequency sound waves that create echoes when they bounce off different parts of the body. These echoes are picked up by the probe and turned into a moving image that is displayed on a monitor while the scan is carried out.

This test takes between 20-30 minutes when you are lying down on a couch or bed.

Cardiac screening - Holter monitor (24hour ECG)

A Holter monitor records your heart rhythm over 24 hours.



Three electrodes will be placed on your chest. Electrodes are small sticky patches, which and connected to a monitor with leads. The monitor is about the size of a mobile phone, and you wear it around your waist. You do not need to stay in hospital, and you can carry on with your normal daily activities during the test.

Fitting the electrodes and monitor takes about 20 minutes

When will I get the results?

Most people will be sent a letter with the results of their screening test. You may be asked to attend a follow-up appointment or to have further screening tests. The advice will be personal to you and your family history.
If you have any questions, please contact:

Network for Inherited Cardiac Conditions Scotland

We are a nationally managed clinical network. The network includes doctors, nurses, genetic counsellors and patient representatives. Our goal is to make sure that people affected by inherited cardiac conditions get high-quality care, in good time. We aim to educate healthcare professionals and the public, to raise their awareness of, and improve their knowledge about, these conditions.

If you need this leaflet in an alternative format (such as large print), please:

- **email psd.contact-us@nhs.scot;**
- **phone 0131 275 6000; or**
- **contact Scotland BSL at www.contactscotland-bsl.org**

Contact us:

Website: **www.niccs.scot.nhs.uk**
Email: **nss.niccs@nhs.scot**

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