Holter Monitor
Patient Guide

Also known as: Holter monitor / Holter test, 24-hour ECG, 24-hour heart monitor, Ambulatory ECG monitoring (AECG), Continuous or portable ECG monitor

What is a Holter Monitor?

A Holter Monitor is a small portable recording device that continuously records your heart's electrical activity for 24 hours. There is no electrical hazard to the person wearing the monitor, and it is safe for patients with pacemakers.

Why is a Holter Monitor used?

- Palpitations (fluttering or skipped beats)
- Dizziness, light-headedness, or fainting
- Shortness of breath or unexplained fatigue
- Chest discomfort (urgency advised by your doctor)
- Heart rhythm abnormalities (e.g. irregular heartbeat)
- Assessment of how well heart medications are working

Patient Charges

4Cyte Pathology bulk bills (no charge to patient) all patients with a valid Medicare referral.

Fitting Appointment and Testing Process

Booking and attendance at an appointment at a 4Cyte pathology collection centre for a monitor fitting appointment is required. At that appointment, the technician will fit and activate the monitoring device, which will then record your heart's electrical activity for the next 24 hours. At the end of the 24 hours, you return to the collection centre and the technician will remove the monitor and submit the results for specialist review and reporting.

Before your fitting appointment — How to prepare

- Bring your doctor's pathology referral form to your fitting appointment
- Shower or bathe beforehand (device may not be waterproof)
- Do not apply moisturiser, body oil, sunscreen, or talc to your chest
- Wear a loose, two-piece outfit; avoid tight dresses or one-piece clothing
- Small areas of chest hair may need shaving (can be done at the clinic)

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What happens at the fitting appointment?

- Skin is cleaned and electrodes or a patch are applied to your chest
- Monitor is attached via wires to a recorder or built into a patch
- The procedure is painless and usually takes 10–20 minutes

During the monitoring period — What to do

- Please keep your day as normal as possible so your doctor can see how your heart behaves during usual activities.
- **Symptom diary (very important):** Record the time of symptoms, what you were doing, and any relevant details (e.g. stress, caffeine, exercise).
- Use the EVENT button at the time symptoms occur. The technician will show you how to use this during fitting.

Water, bathing, and restrictions during the monitoring period

- Most traditional Holter monitors are not waterproof
- Some patch monitors allow limited showering — follow device-specific instructions
- Avoid swimming, spas, and baths unless advised
- Do not undergo MRI scans while wearing the monitor
- Avoid strong magnetic or electrical fields; household electronics are usually safe

Clothing tips during the monitoring period

- Wear loose, comfortable tops - avoid clothing that rubs heavily over electrodes
- Choose bras that do not disturb wires or stickers

If something goes wrong

If an electrode comes off or a lead disconnects during the 24-hour monitoring period, press the EVENT button, reconnect the lead to the correct electrode, and record this in your diary.

When to seek medical advice

- Contact your doctor if you develop significant itching, blistering, or skin rash.
- **The monitor records information only and does not treat symptoms.**
- Seek urgent help immediately (Call 000) if you experience severe or persistent chest pain, fainting, severe dizziness, new weakness, severe shortness of breath, or any symptoms that feel like an emergency.

After the test

- Return the device at the time and date instructed
- The recording will be analysed and sent to your referring doctor
- Result turnaround times vary; your doctor will discuss the findings with you

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