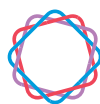




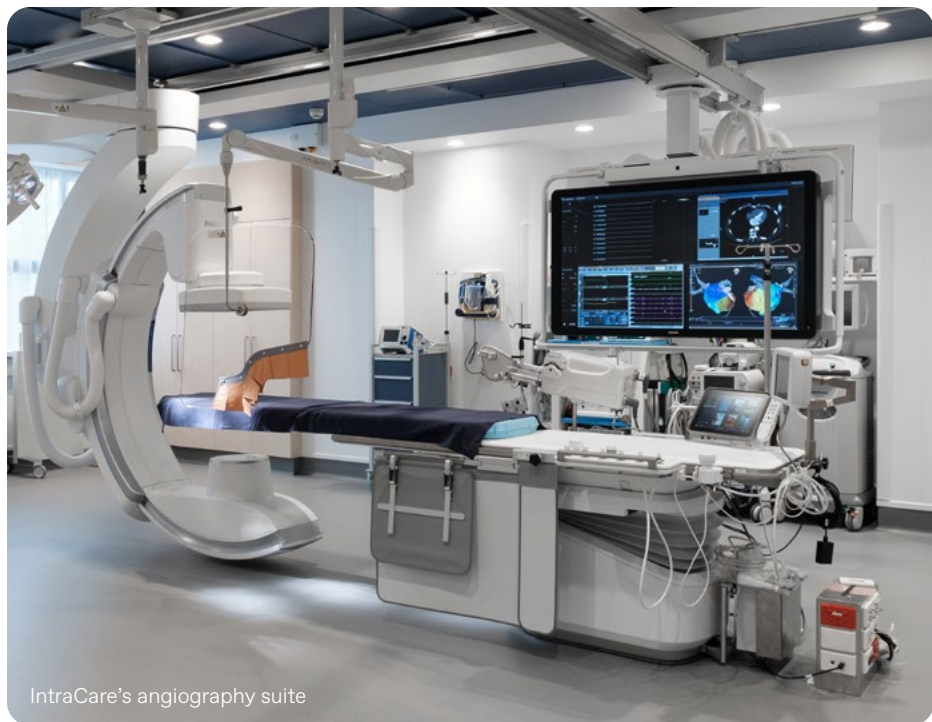
YOUR GUIDE TO

# Transoesophageal Echocardiogram (TOE)



**IntraCare**

Interventional  
Cardiology



IntraCare's angiography suite

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# About this procedure

This guide provides information about a transoesophageal echocardiogram (TOE) procedure. It includes details about what is involved, how to prepare and what to expect during and after the procedure. Please use this in addition to information from your doctor and nurse.

A transoesophageal echocardiogram (TOE) is performed in a procedure room or an angiography suite at IntraCare in Epsom or North Harbour. Your cardiologist will be assisted by our team of nurses and other highly skilled personnel.

## What is a 'TOE'?

A transoesophageal echocardiogram (TOE) is a type of ultrasound scan undertaken to assess the structure and function of the heart. During the procedure, a flexible probe is passed through the mouth to the oesophagus, providing very high-quality images of the heart and the valves in 2D and 3D.

## Common indications for a TOE

- To look for causes of a stroke such as blood clots, any defects like a flap (Patent Foramen Ovale) or a hole (Atrial Septal Defect) between the upper chambers of the heart, or plaque in the aorta.
- To show the exact mechanism and severity of regurgitation (leaking), prolapse (bulging), or stenosis (narrowing) of heart valve/s for possible treatment with surgery or replacement.
- To assess for any problems with the aorta.
- To ensure a blood clot is not in the heart before a cardioversion or electrical procedure for patients with atrial fibrillation or atrial flutter.
- To gather specific information before certain procedures such as device closure of the left atrial appendage, atrial septal defect, or patent foramen ovale.

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# Before your procedure

## Pre procedure phone call

A nurse from IntraCare will call you 24–48 hours prior to your procedure to discuss the following information:

- Your admission time.
- When you should stop eating and drinking.
- Medication instructions.
- Allergies (including medications, contrast dye, dressings/plasters and food).
- Answer any further questions.

## Fasting instructions

To ensure your safety during the procedure, it is important that you follow the fasting guidelines below:

Food – **Stop 6 hours prior** to procedure. Do not consume any of the following within 6 hours of your planned procedure time:

- Solid food
- Milk-based products
- Soluble fibre
- Jelly

Fluids – Clear (transparent) fluids are encouraged up to **2 hours before** your planned procedure time. These include:

- Water
- Clear juices
- Cordials
- Black tea or coffee

Avoid fluids containing milk, pulp, or jelly.

Sip-Til-Send (STS) Protocol\*

- Unless advised otherwise, you can sip up to **200ml of water per hour** in the 2 hours before your planned procedure time.

\* Your nurse will confirm during your pre-procedure phone call whether this protocol is suitable for you.

## Anticoagulation (blood thinner)

- If you take Aspirin/Cartia and/or Clopidogrel you may continue to take these.
- Please inform the nurse during pre procedure phone call if you are taking any blood thinners, such as Warfarin, Dabigatran (Pradaxa), Rivaroxaban, or Apixaban.
- If you are taking Warfarin, our nurses will review your INR levels prior to your procedure and advise any medication changes if necessary.

## Other regular medications

Please continue to take these unless advised otherwise by your cardiologist. If you are taking a diuretic or water pills (e.g. frusemide, spironolactone) you may need to withhold this on the morning of the procedure. It is important that you let us know if you are taking the following medications: Liraglutide (Victoza™, Saxenda™) Dulaglutide (Trulicity™), Semaglutide (Ozempic™, Wegovy™), Tirzepatide (Mounjaro™).

## Reminders for the day of your procedure

- If you are on regular medication, please bring this with you in its original packaging.
- Please leave all your jewellery and valuables at home. You are welcome to bring your mobile phone in with you.
- We recommend wearing loose-fitting clothing and shoes that are easy to slip on/off.
- You are encouraged to bring a friend or a family member as a support person before and after your procedure.
- Please arrange for someone to drive you home after the procedure as you will not be able to drive for 24 hours following your TOE.
- The planned procedure time is an estimate only and may vary. We will keep you informed of any unexpected delays on the day.

## Informed consent

As with any procedure, there are potential risks involved. Your cardiologist will explain the procedure, discuss possible risks and answer any questions you may have. Your whānau or support person are welcome to be part of this discussion. You will then be asked to sign the consent form. This will occur either at an earlier appointment, or on the day of your procedure.

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# Your procedure

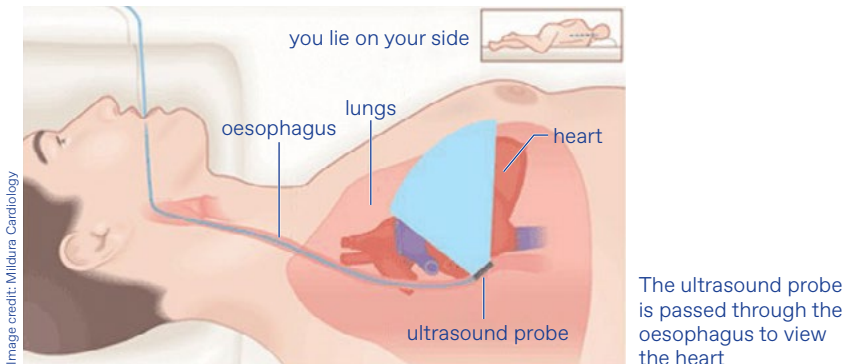
The procedure usually takes 20–30 minutes and should not be painful or uncomfortable.

## Preparation

A small intravenous (IV) line will be inserted into a vein in your arm. This will be used to administer medication to help you relax and to keep you comfortable during the procedure.

Once you are in the procedure room or suite, devices for monitoring blood pressure, heart rate and oxygen levels will be fitted to ensure your safety during the procedure. You will also be given oxygen through small prongs in your nose.

Your cardiologist will spray your throat with local anaesthetic (lignocaine) to help numb the area. A bite block is then placed into your mouth to prevent you biting the TOE probe. You will then be positioned on your left side and the flexible ultrasound probe will be passed to your oesophagus, providing very high-quality images of the structure and function of heart. Most patients fall asleep and have minimal recollection of the actual procedure.



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# After your procedure

You will be taken to recovery where the nursing team will monitor your recovery. If appropriate, you will be discharged home after 1.5–2 hours.

## Going home and recovery

- Following your procedure, it is important that you **do not drive for 24 hours**. Please ensure you have a family member or friend to drive you home from the hospital, as you may still be under the effects of sedation.
- Please arrange for someone to stay the night with you at home after your procedure to support your recovery.
- Due to the short sedation, you may feel lethargic afterwards with reduced concentration. For this reason, for 24 hours after your procedure it is important you:
  - Do not make any legal decisions or sign legal documents.
  - Do not do any activity requiring strength, concentration, or full alertness for the rest of the day.
- We advise you not to return to work for the day of your procedure.
- You may resume normal activity the following day.
- Over the next day it is normal for your throat to feel a little uncomfortable. You can use lozenges if required.

Please take this booklet and your discharge summary with you if visiting the GP, afterhours or hospital.

**If you have any concerns after your procedure, please contact IntraCare:  
Monday to Friday: 09 630 1961 (between 6:30am and 6:00pm).  
For after-hours, weekends, and public holidays, contact 027 482 0763.**

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# How to find us

## IntraCare Epsom

Both IntraCare and Allevia Hospital will be involved with your care for this procedure.

**When you arrive, please report to the Allevia Hospital Admissions Lounge (2 on the map).**

Directions to the Admissions Lounge:

- From the Level 1 Carpark – Walk across the footbridge towards the main reception. Take the Yellow Lift to Level 2. The Admissions Lounge will be on your right as you exit the lift.
- From the Ground Floor Carpark – Follow the blue walkway to the Yellow Lift and take it to Level 2. The Admissions Lounge will be on your right as you exit the lift.

98 Mountain Rd, Epsom, Auckland 1023

P: +64 9 630 1961 (Monday to Friday 6:30am–6:00pm)

P: +64 27 482 0763 (after hours, weekends and public holidays)

E: [admin@intracare.co.nz](mailto:admin@intracare.co.nz)

W: [intracare.co.nz](http://intracare.co.nz)

## Where to park

A 10 minute patient ‘drop off zone’ is available on the level 1 carpark. Head up the ramp as you enter the carpark from the Main Entrance (Gate 1) on Mountain Road.


The first 30 minutes are free and apply only once the vehicle licence plate number has been entered into a payment terminal. Patient parking is available on all levels of the car park. Parking limits apply, and parking spaces are marked (P90, P180, and All Day Parking).


The Allevia Hospital parking is managed by a separate company, and a fine may be issued if your vehicle breaches any of the parking terms and conditions.

There is free 120 minute parking available nearby on Mountain Road, Gilgit Road and Almorah Road after 9am.





 Main entrance to patient and visitor car park  
- 250 spaces

 Walkway to main reception  
Pedestrian access to main reception from car park

 Yellow Lift

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 Allevia Hospital reception and Allevia Radiology 1 reception | 8 Awanui Labs (blood tests)                    |
| 2 Admissions Lounge  | 9 Allevia Radiology 2 (CT, ultrasound)         |
| 3 Canopy Cancer Care   | 10 The Heart Group                             |
| 4 ARO (Auckland Radiation Oncology)                            | 11 Allevia Radiology PET-CT Canopy Cancer Care |
| 5 Allevia Café and outdoor dining courtyard                    | 12 Allevia Specialist Centre                   |
| 6 Allevia Pharmacy   | 13 Allevia Radiology 1 (MRI/X-ray)             |
| 7 IntraCare  | A B C D E Allevia Specialist Centre entrances  |

## IntraCare North Harbour

When you arrive, please report directly to the **IntraCare reception desk** on the ground floor of the Northern Clinic of the Southern Cross Hospital.

IntraCare North Harbour  
Southern Cross Hospital  
Ground Floor, Northern Clinic  
Entry A, 212 Wairau Rd  
Wairau Valley, Auckland 0627

P: +64 9 630 1961  
(Monday to Friday 6:30am–6:00pm)

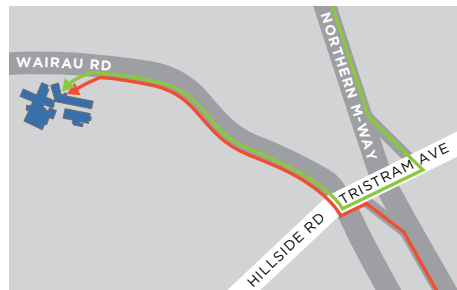
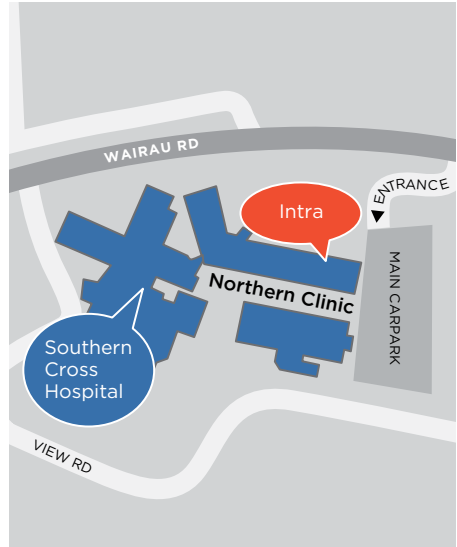
P: +64 27 482 0763 (after hours,  
weekends and public holidays)

E: [admin@intracare.co.nz](mailto:admin@intracare.co.nz)

W: [intracare.co.nz](http://intracare.co.nz)

## Where to park

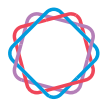
Free parking is available either directly outside the Northern Clinic or in the main carpark (down the short ramp past the Northern Clinic). Enter through Entry A off Wairau Road.



### Key:

- Northbound motorway traffic
- Southbound motorway traffic





# IntraCare

Intra Limited

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