

Holter Monitoring

What is Holter monitoring and why is it used?

Holter monitoring is a recording of your heartbeats. It records for 24 to 48 hours, while you go about your daily life.

The monitor records the electrical activity of the heart. We call this your “heart rhythm.” An odd heart rhythm, such as the change in either speed or pattern of the heartbeat, is called an arrhythmia.

A monitor may be ordered to:

- Find odd heartbeats that may not occur during a standard ECG.
- Look for symptoms that come and go, such as palpitations, dizzy spells, or fainting spells.
- See how well your medicine or pacemaker treatment is working.

The Monitor

The monitor is small and about the size of a pager. It is in a pouch you wear around your neck or waist. The monitor has a cable that hooks to five sticky patches, called electrodes. The patches are stuck to different areas of the chest. These patches record the heartbeats.

Reminders

The cable, connected leads, and patches must remain attached the whole time. If a patch comes off, clean the area and put back on. You will have extra patches.

Do not get the monitor, cable, leads or patches wet. Do not swim, take a bath, or shower while wearing the monitor.

Try to sleep on your back, with the recorder at your side. This will keep the patches from being pulled off.

Avoid electric blankets, magnets, metal detectors, and high voltage areas such as power lines. Signals from such devices may affect the data.

Diary

You will need to keep a diary when wearing the monitor. It helps us compare your actions and symptoms to the ECG record.

You will need to record the date, time and length of:

- Exercise and physical activity (walking/jogging/biking, yard work, household chores, snow removal).
- Physical or emotional distress causing a sudden increase in heart rate (argument).
- Any dizziness, fainting, racing heart, shortness of breath, chest pain/pressure or tightness symptoms.

Return the Monitor

Depending on the location where the monitor was attached, you will either return the monitor in person to that clinic or mail back in a self-addressed paid envelope. . You need to return the monitor, cable and diary. Remove and throw away all patches, tape and the pouch before you return the monitor.

Results

A heart doctor will look at the data. The results will be given to your doctor. Your doctor will share the results with you and design a care plan that is best for you.

Who to Call

For questions contact the Heart Station at **(608) 263-6609**.

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 12/2019. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#5488.