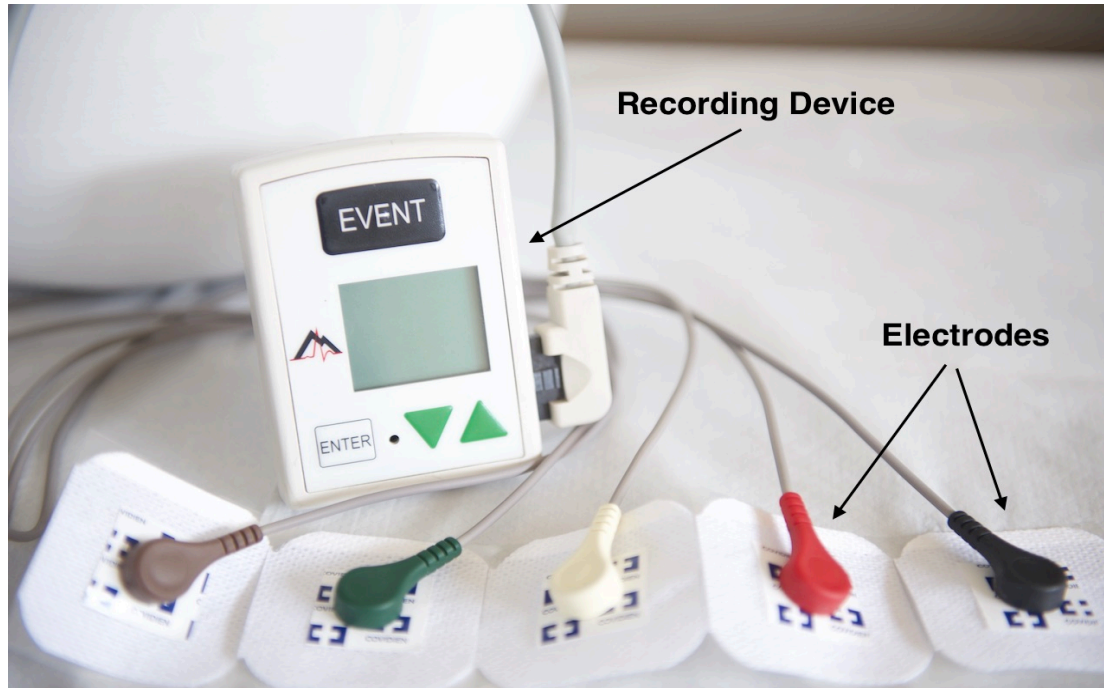




24 hr Holter (or Ambulatory ECG) Monitoring

(Note: the information below is a general guide only)

A Holter monitor is a small, digital device that keeps track of your heart rate and rhythm for 24 hrs. During that time, the device records all of your ECG (Electrocardiograph), which is record of the heart's electrical activity.



The information obtained tells your doctor if you have a heart rhythm problem or not.

Indications:

If you have following signs or symptoms of a heart rhythm problem, a Holter monitor can be ordered:

- Irregular heartbeat (arrhythmia)
- Very slow or very fast heart beat
- Palpitations (abnormal awareness of your heartbeat).
- Shortness of breath, Dizziness / lightheadedness, Unexplained fainting.
- Abnormal ECG
- Assess effects and/or efficacy of medications
- Any heart condition that increases your risk of an abnormal heart rhythm.

Risks

There are no significant risks involved with Holter monitor other than possible discomfort or skin irritation where the electrodes are placed. The Holter monitor should be kept dry otherwise it will get damaged. Please do not swim or take bath/ shower when wearing Holter monitor. However, if you have a wireless Holter monitor, you'll be shown how to disconnect and reconnect the sensors and the monitor so that you can shower or bathe. Holter monitor is usually not affected by other electrical appliances. But its better to avoid metal detectors, strong magnets, microwave ovens, electric blankets, and electric razors / toothbrushes while wearing one because these devices can interrupt the signal from the

electrodes to the Holter monitor. Also, keep your cellphones and portable music players at least 6 inches away from the monitor for the same reason.

Procedure

You will need an appointment to have the Holter Monitor fitted. You should take a bath / shower before this appointment because once your monitoring begins you can't get the monitor wet or remove the monitor to bathe.

A technician will place electrodes on your chest. These electrodes are about the size of a 50-cent coin. For men, a small amount of hair may be shaved to make sure the electrodes stick properly.

The electrodes are then connected to a recording device with several wires. You will be shown how to properly wear the recording device so that it can record data transmitted from the electrodes. The recording device is about the size of a deck of cards.

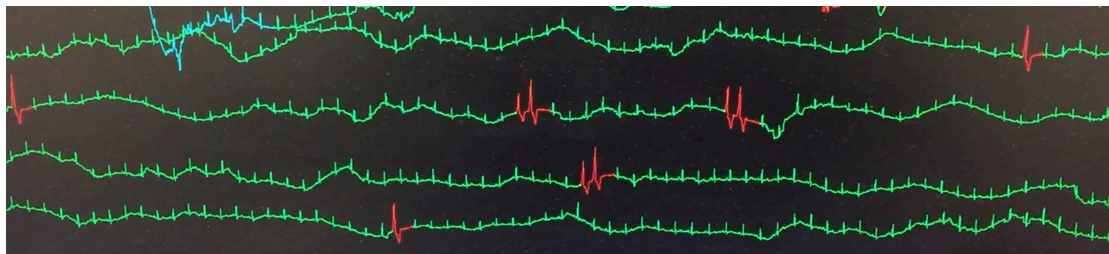
It's better to keep a diary of all the activities that you do while wearing the monitor. It's particularly important to record in the diary any symptoms of palpitations, skipped heartbeats, shortness of breath, chest pain or lightheadedness. You may be instructed to press a particular button on the recording device if and when you feel any symptoms.

Once your monitor is fitted and you've received instructions on how to wear it, you can leave your doctor's office and resume your normal activities. Holter monitoring is painless and noninvasive. You can hide the electrodes and wires under your clothes, and you can wear the recording device on your belt or attached to a strap. Once your monitoring begins, please do not take the Holter monitor off — you must wear it at all times, even when you sleep.

During Holter monitor, you should carry out your usual daily activities. However it may be prudent to avoid excessive sweating as this will cause the electrodes to come off from your chest and there will be no recording. If the quality of the study is poor it may have to be repeated.

After the procedure

Once your monitoring period is over, you'll come back to HeartWest to return the Holter monitor. A nurse or technician will remove the electrodes from your chest, which may cause some discomfort similar to an adhesive bandage being pulled off your skin. You will also hand in the diary you kept while you wore the Holter monitor.



Report

Later on an ECG technician will download the data from the device and prepare it for reporting. A HeartWest Cardiologist will then look at the data and prepare a report. This will be sent to your referring doctor who will be the best person to discuss this with you.