

# Event Monitors

## Definition

A Cardiac Event Monitor is a device worn by a patient for a period of up to 30 days. The purpose of the study is to provide the clinician with ECG information for an extended period correlating with symptoms felt by the patient.



## How the Test is Performed

Each type of monitor is slightly different, but they all have sensors (called electrodes) to record your ECG. In some models, these attach to the skin on your chest using sticky patches. The sensors need good contact with your skin. Poor contact can cause poor results.

You should keep your skin free from oils, creams, and sweat (as much as possible). The technician who places the monitor will perform the following to get a good ECG recording:

- Men will have the area on their chest shaved where the electrode patches will be placed.
- The area of skin where the electrodes will be attached will be cleaned with alcohol before the sensors are attached.

You can carry or wear a cardiac event monitor up to 30 days. You carry the device in your hand, wear on your wrist, or keep it in your pocket. Event monitors can be worn for weeks or until symptoms occur.

### While wearing the device:

- You should continue your normal activities while wearing the monitor. You may be asked to exercise or adjust your activity level during the test.
- Keep a diary of what activities you do while wearing the monitor, how you feel, and any symptoms you have. This will help your health care provider match symptoms with your monitor findings.
- The monitoring station staff will tell you how to transfer data over the telephone.
- Your provider will look at the data and see if there have been any abnormal heart rhythms.
- The monitoring company or the provider who ordered the monitor may contact you if a concerning rhythm is discovered.

While wearing the device, you may be asked to avoid certain things that can disrupt the signal between the sensors and the monitor. These may include:

- Cell phones
- Electric blankets
- Electric toothbrushes
- High-voltage areas
- Magnets
- Metal detector

## How the Test will Feel

This is a painless test. However, the adhesive of the electrode patches may irritate your skin. Tell your provider if you are allergic to any tape or other adhesives. This goes away on its own once you remove the patches. You must keep the monitor close to your body.

## Event monitoring may be used:

- To assess someone with palpitations. Palpitations are feelings that your heart is pounding or racing or beating irregularly. They can be felt in your chest, throat, or neck.
- To identify the reason for a fainting or near fainting episode.
- To diagnose heartbeats in people with risk factors for arrhythmias.
- To monitor your heart after a heart attack or when starting or stopping a heart medicine.
- To check if a pacemaker or an implantable cardioverter-defibrillator is working properly.
- To look for the cause of a stroke when the cause cannot be easily found with other tests.

## What Abnormal Results Mean

Abnormal results may include various arrhythmias. Changes may mean that the heart is not getting enough oxygen.

It may be used to diagnose:

- Atrial fibrillation or flutter
- Multifocal atrial tachycardia
- Paroxysmal supraventricular tachycardia
- Ventricular tachycardia
- Slow heart rate (bradycardia)
- Heart block

## Risks

There are no risks associated with the test, other than possible skin irritation.

## How Long will Test Last

You will wear the monitor for 30 days.

**Alternative Names** Ambulatory electrocardiography; Electrocardiography (ECG) - ambulatory; Continuous electrocardiograms (EKGs); Holter monitors