

Holter Monitor

What is a Holter monitor?

A Holter monitor is a device that records the electrical activity of your heart. You wear the monitor during your normal daily activities, including sleeping.

Holter monitors are a safe and useful way to find heart rhythm problems that otherwise might not be found.

A Holter monitor is also called a continuous ambulatory electrocardiographic monitor (AEM).

When is it used?

Symptoms such as a fast heartbeat, fluttering feelings in your chest (palpitations), shortness of breath, dizziness, fainting spells, and chest pain may have many different causes. A Holter monitor is used to see if your heart is causing your symptoms. The Holter monitor checks the rhythm of your heartbeats while you do your usual daily activities. The monitor can alert your healthcare provider to possible problems and help your provider decide on treatment.

If you are taking medicines for a heart problem, a Holter monitor can be used to see how well the medicines are working.

What happens during the test?

When you get a Holter monitor, sticky electrodes will be put on your chest. Men who have a lot of hair on their chest may have small areas shaved so that the patches will stick to their skin. The electrodes are attached to a small recorder. You can carry the recorder on a belt or shoulder strap. The recorder will record the electrical signals of your heart all of the time you are wearing it.

Wear loose-fitting clothes when you get the monitor and while you are wearing the monitor. Do not shower with it.

You will be given a diary to record your activities and symptoms for the next 24 or 48 hours while you are wearing the recorder. It is very important that you write down your activities and symptoms. Your provider wants to see if some activities bring on your symptoms.

What happens after the test?

When you return to the office or clinic, your healthcare provider will remove the electrodes and review your diary and the information recorded by the monitor. Your provider will discuss the results with you at your next visit, or sooner if needed. You may need to wear a Holter monitor more than once, for example, if you switch to a new medicine.

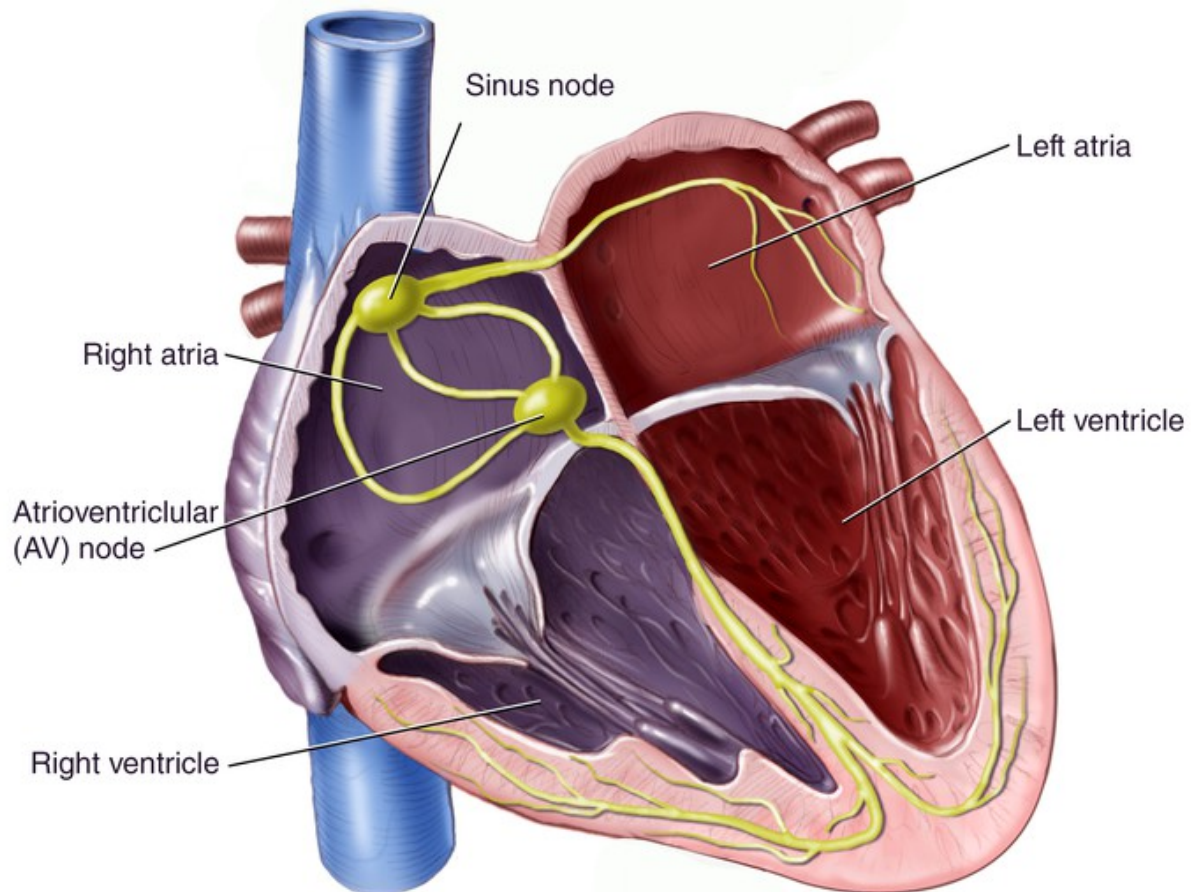
What are the risks of this test?

This test does not have any risks, but your skin might be irritated by the adhesive on the electrode patches. Skin irritation will quickly go away after the patches are removed.

Developed by RelayHealth.

This content is reviewed periodically and is subject to change as new health information becomes available. The information is intended to inform and educate and is not a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional.

Nodes Responsible for Cardiac Rhythm



The electrical impulse starts in the sinus node. It travels to both atria, causing them to contract, and triggers the AV node. The impulse travels from the AV node, stimulating contraction of the ventricles.

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