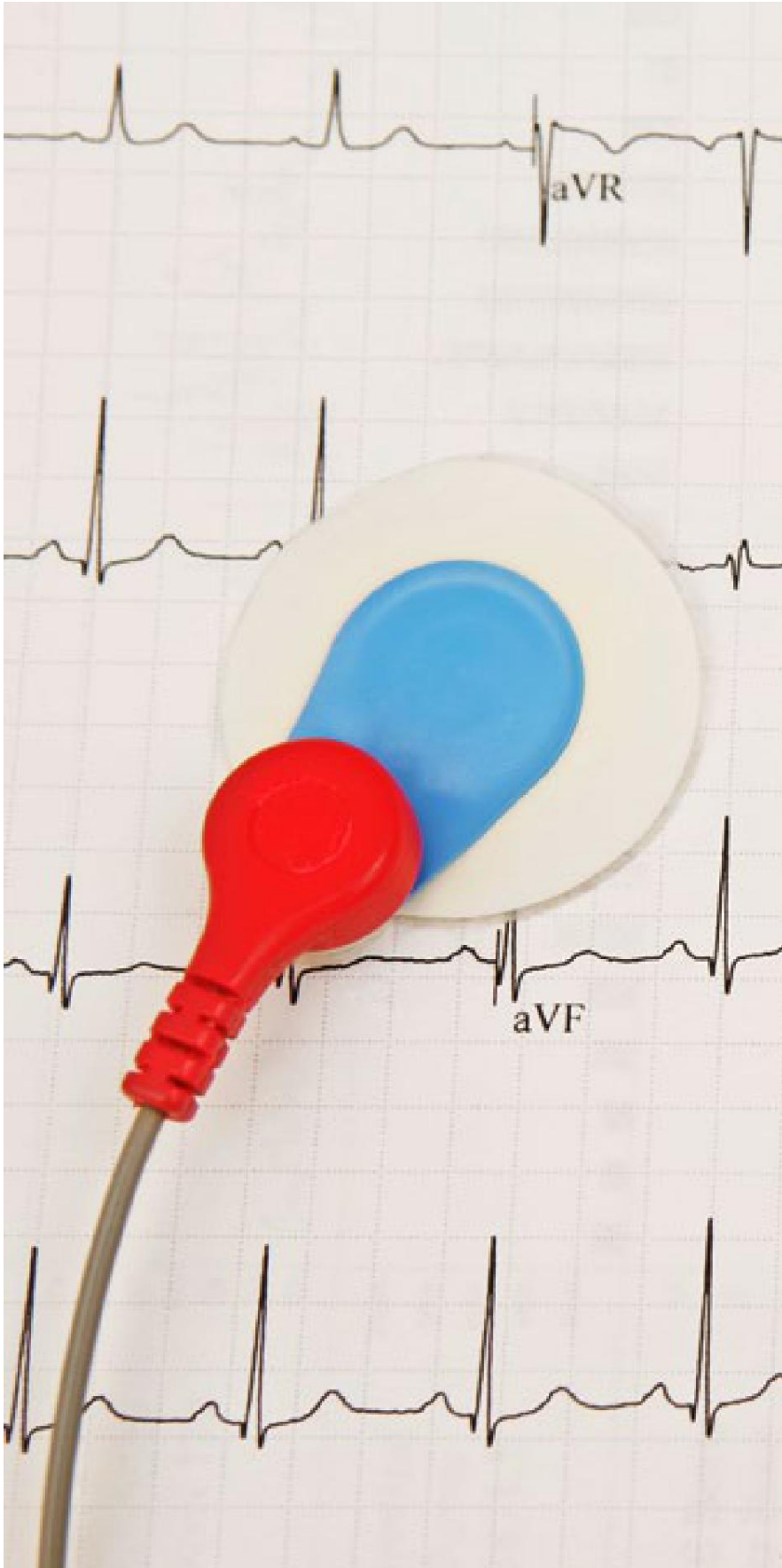




Electrocardiography (ECG, EKG)



Overview

This is a test of your heart. It lets your doctor see how well your heart is working. A doctor can use this test to find out if you have a heart problem, or to monitor a heart problem your doctor already knows you have.

Preparation

To get ready for the test, small discs called "electrodes" are stuck to your skin. They are put on your chest, your arms and your legs. Some spots may need to be shaved so the electrodes will stick.

Procedure and Analysis

During a standard test, you lie still as the electrodes monitor your heart. You may be asked to hold your breath during parts of the test. The electrodes do not send electricity through your body, they simply detect the electrical waves your heart makes. This is recorded on a chart. The electrodes can see how fast your heart is beating. They can see if it has a steady rhythm. And, they can detect the strength of the electrical signals that trigger your heartbeat. It usually takes about five to ten minutes to complete the test.

Conclusion

When the test is done, the electrodes are removed and you can go home. Your doctor will talk with you about your test results and will create a care plan for you if needed.