

Transcranial Doppler

A transcranial doppler (TCD) test uses ultrasound waves to measure the blood flow rate in the main (cerebral) arteries of the brain. It helps detect blockages, narrowing or spasms of the arteries. A TCD test takes about 1 to 1 1/2 hours.

*If you have
any questions,
please ask
your physician.*

Before the test

There are no diet or activity restrictions before this test.

Plan to arrive 15 minutes before your test time. Be sure to bring:

- Your physician's written order for the test (if you have one)
- A list of your allergies
- A list of all your current medications (prescription, over-the-counter and herbal)
- Photo ID
- Medical insurance information and card
- Medicare card (Medicare patients only)

For their own safety, children under 16 may not visit in the testing area.

Please come to Galter Pavilion, 201 East Huron Street, and check in at the 7th floor reception desk.

Parking is available for patients and visitors in the garage at 222 East Huron Street, across from Feinberg and Galter pavilions. For a discounted rate, please bring your parking ticket with you. You can validate your ticket at the Customer Services Desks on the 1st and 2nd floor of Feinberg and Galter pavilions, and on the 1st floor of Prentice Women's Hospital.

During the test

If your physician decides that you will need an IV (into the vein) line, the nurse will place it in your arm. The technologist (tech) will help you onto an exam table. Then, the tech will apply gel and move a small, hand-held device (transducer) over the skin:

- On each side of your head
- Under your chin
- Over your closed eyelids
- On the back of your neck

The transducer will transmit sound waves to a monitor that records the blood flow rates.

You may hear a pulsating sound that matches your heartbeat. It is important to lie still and not talk during this exam.

After the test

The tech will provide towels to help remove the gel. You may then leave. You may resume your normal diet and activities. Most often, your physician will receive your initial findings within 48 hours. A full report will follow in about 5 business days.

If you have questions about this test, please call the Neurological Testing Center at 312.926.8120 or speak with your care team.