

Interpretation of cardiac electrophysiology

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DESCRIPTION

An Electro Physiology (EP) study is a test done to evaluate the activity or electrical system of your heart and is used to diagnose abnormal heartbeats or arrhythmias. The test is done by inserting catheters and then wire electrodes, which measure electrical activity, through the blood vessels entering the heart.

When a person's heart doesn't beat normally, doctors use EPS to find out why. Electrical signals generally travel through the heart in a regular pattern. Heart attacks, aging, and high blood pressure can cause scarring of the heart. This can cause the heart to beat in an irregular (uneven) pattern. The extra abnormal electrical pathways found in certain congenital heart conditions can also cause arrhythmias. During EPS, doctors insert a thin tube called a catheter into a blood vessel that leads to your heart. A special electrode catheter designed for EP studies allows them to send electrical signals to your heart and record its electrical activity.

The EP study is taking place in the hospital's electrophysiology laboratory, where you are lying on an X-ray table. A camera and television screens, heart monitors, and various instruments will be nearby. Electrodes are placed on your chest and back to connect you to monitoring equipment. A blood pressure cuff will be placed on your upper arm to monitor your blood pressure.

To prevent infection, a doctor will shave and clean the groin and possibly the neck area where the catheters will be inserted. The area is cleaned with

an antiseptic. Sterile sheets are placed over your body. Find a comfortable position so that you can remain calm during the procedure. Do not touch the sterile areas of the neck and groin. Depending on the type of study you are having, you may be given medicine through a vein into your arm to calm or numb it. These medications will help reduce your anxiety and ease your discomfort. Your doctor will let you know if sedative medications are appropriate. This type of procedure is invaluable in providing your doctor with the information they need to diagnose and correct your abnormal heart rhythm. While you may be concerned about your EPS, it is important that you follow your doctor's recommendations before and during the test. If at any point during this process you have any questions, feel free to ask. Together, you and your doctor will walk the path to better heart health.

Electro physiologist

A clinical cardiac electro physiologist, or cardiac PE, is a healthcare provider who treats irregular heartbeats. A cardiac PE is a type of cardiologist. A cardiologist is a healthcare provider who has completed 3 or more years of additional training beyond internal medicine to treat heart and blood vessel problems. Cardiac EP is not your GP. This healthcare provider only works with patients who require specific heart-related care. Your doctor may refer you to cardiac PE if you have symptoms of an irregular heartbeat. These can include dizziness, fainting, and fluttering in the chest. Or you can see a cardiac PE when you have risk factors for a dangerous arrhythmia, such as heart disease. You will likely see a cardiac PE in a hospital or cardiac clinic.

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