

THE HEART OF THE MATTER: PEDIATRIC ECG TESTING

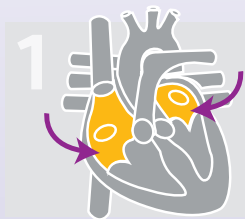
WHAT IS AN ECG?

Electrical stimulation causes your heart to beat. This “electricity” can be measured by a test called an electrocardiogram (ECG, also known as an EKG). Let’s break it down:

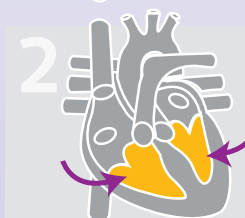
electro - **cardio** - **gram**
caused by electricity heart record or measurement

HOW DOES AN ECG WORK?

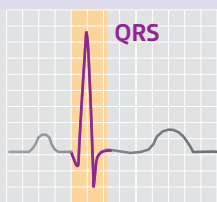
Typically, the heart is made up of two top chambers (atria) and two bottom chambers (ventricles). As the atria or ventricles beat, they generate a different shape on the graph.



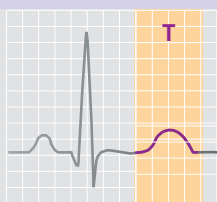
1 When the **top chambers contract**, it generates the first part of the ECG called the P wave.



2 When the **lower chambers of your heart contract**, it creates the second part of the ECG, the QRS complex.



3 When the **lower chambers relax**, they generate the third part of the ECG called the T wave.



WHAT DOES IT MEASURE?

By capturing these measurements, an ECG shows the cardiologist your heart’s:



TIMING

&



RHYTHM

WHAT ARE THEY LOOKING FOR?

Some medical conditions in infants and children may cause changes in the ECG pattern and can signal a heart problem.

ECG test showed:

Too fast, too slow or irregular heartbeat

Heart muscle that’s too thick or parts of the heart that are too big

Lack of blood flow to the heart muscle

Inflammation of the sac that surrounds the heart

This may mean:

Arrhythmia

Heart enlargement

Coronary artery disease

Pericarditis

To learn more about these conditions and to get a heart consultation, visit:

Luriechildrens.org/ECG