

How to Apply a 5 Lead ECG

By Allen Smith, eHow User

If you're a man or woman over age of 40 with a [family](#) history of heart disease, or just getting ready to embark on a new [exercise](#) program, chances are your physician will want to perform a resting electrocardiogram (EKG) on you. An EKG is performed by applying a series of electronic leads (three, five or 12) at various places on your body to look at the rhythm and rate of your heart from different angles.

Difficulty: Moderate

Instructions

things you'll need:

- Electrocardiogram machine
- Press-on, disposable electrodes
- Electrocardiogram leads
- Rubbing alcohol
- 2 x 2 gauze pads

- 1 Remove the patient's shirt or blouse. If it's a woman, generally you can loosen the bra to make allowances for electrode placement.
- 2 Prepare your patient's skin to remove any oil on the surface of the skin by rubbing an area approximately 2 inches by 2 inches with a gauze pad saturated with rubbing alcohol.
- 3 Prepare the skin below the right clavicle by rubbing it with alcohol. After it dries, peel the adhesive backing off of an electron lead and apply firmly to the skin. Connect the white electron lead to it.
- 4 Prepare the skin below the left clavicle by rubbing it with alcohol. After it dries, peel the adhesive backing off of an electron lead and apply firmly to the skin. Connect the black electron lead to it.
- 5 Prepare the skin below at the fourth inter-costal area on the right side of the sternum by rubbing it with alcohol. Allowing it to dry, and peel the adhesive backing off of an electron lead and apply firmly to the skin. Connect the brown electron lead to it.
- 6 Prepare the skin on the lower right-hand side of the rib cage by rubbing it with alcohol. After allowing it to dry, peel the adhesive backing off of an electron lead and apply firmly to the skin. Connect the green electrode to it.

Tips & Warnings

- Be sure that the skin is free of surface oil before applying a lead.
- Be sure that the electrode is firmly attached to the lead.
- Be sure that articles of clothing do not come into contact with the lead.