

Cardiovascular Technician

Cardiovascular Technicians, also called *Diagnostic Imaging Workers*, operate special imaging equipment to create images or conduct tests. The images and test results help physicians assess and diagnose medical conditions.

Cardiovascular Technicians typically do the following:

- Prepare patients for procedures by taking their medical history and answering any questions about the procedure
- Prepare and maintain diagnostic imaging equipment
- Operate equipment to obtain diagnostic images or to conduct tests
- Review images or test results to check for quality and adequate coverage of the areas needed for diagnoses
- Recognize the difference between normal and abnormal images, and identify other diagnostic information
- Analyze diagnostic information to provide a summary of findings for physicians
- Record findings and keep track of patients' records

Cardiovascular Technicians create images and conduct tests involving the heart and lungs. The following are examples of types of Cardiovascular Technicians:

Cardiovascular Invasive Specialists, also known as *Cardiac Catheterization Technologists*, monitor patients' heart rates and help physicians in diagnosing and treating problems with patients' hearts. They assist with cardiac catheterization, which involves threading a catheter through a patient's artery to the heart. They also prepare and monitor patients during open-heart surgery and during the insertion of pacemakers and stents. Technologists prepare patients for procedures by shaving and cleansing the area into which the catheter will be inserted and by administering topical anesthesia. During the procedure, they monitor the patient's blood pressure and heart rate.

Cardiographic or Electrocardiogram (EKG) Technicians specialize in EKG testing. EKG machines monitor the heart's performance through electrodes attached to a patient's chest, arms, and legs. The tests can be done while the patient is at rest or while the patient is physically active. For a stress test, the patient walks on a treadmill and the technician gradually increases the speed to observe the effect on the heart of increased exertion.

Pulmonary Function Technologists, also known as *Cardiopulmonary Technologists*, monitor and test patients' lungs and breathing. For example, they use spirometry to measure the amount of air that a

patient can inhale or exhale. These technologists help physicians in diagnosing and treating problems of the pulmonary system.

Work Environment

Most Cardiovascular Technicians work full time and are employed in hospitals, physicians' offices or medical and diagnostic laboratories.

Watch a video about being a Cardiovascular Technician

Top Local Employers: Kaiser Permanente, Stanford Health Care, El Camino Hospital, Soliant Health, HCA Holdings

Median Pay

\$67,765

Job Growth (2020-2025)

10%

Education and Training

Diagnostic medical sonographers and cardiovascular technologists and technicians, including vascular technologists, need formal education, such as an associate degree or a postsecondary certificate. Many employers also require professional certification.

Local Education:

City College San Francisco

For More Information:

Bureau of Labor Statistics

Alliance of Cardiovascular Professionals

