

Having a hysterosalpingogram (HSG)

What is an HSG?

This is a special X-ray examination to view the inside of the uterus (womb) and fallopian tubes. A special fluid is injected into the uterus that can show abnormalities of the uterus and problems with the tubes, such as blockage, on the X-ray pictures.

The examination is conducted by a radiologist (a specialist X-ray doctor) or by a senior radiographer (an X-ray professional) who has been specially trained to carry out this test.

An HSG is carried out between days 7-10 of your cycle, that is after your period has finished and before you have ovulated.

You must not be pregnant at the time of an HSG. You must not have sexual intercourse from the first day of your period until after your examination.

On the day of your test

- Please bring your appointment letter with you.
- Your partner or a friend may accompany you; however, they will need to wait in the waiting room during the test.
- We recommend that you take a painkiller (such as paracetamol or ibuprofen) up to one hour before your appointment.
- You can eat and drink normally on the day of your test.
- Please do not bring children with you. Children will not be able to come into the room with you when you have the test and there are no childcare facilities.

What happens during the hysterosalpingogram?

When you arrive at the X-ray Department we will ask you to change into a hospital gown. You will lie on a couch in the X-ray room. A speculum is inserted into the vagina (similar to having a smear test), and a small plastic cannula (tube) is passed through the cervix into the uterus. A special fluid is injected through the tube and a series of X-ray pictures are taken. When the X-ray pictures are complete the test is finished. The examination should take 20-30 minutes in total.

Some patients experience brief period-like cramps during the test and occasionally for two or three hours afterwards, although many patients do not experience any pain at all. We advise taking a painkiller beforehand (see above) as a precaution.

After the hysterosalpingogram

You may experience slight spotting, which is normal.

Are there any risks with this test

There is a very small risk (<1%) of getting an infection following an HSG. Occasionally a short course of antibiotics is recommended after the test to reduce the possibility of infection, depending on the result. You will be advised at the time of your test if this applies to you. In the majority of patients no antibiotics are required.

This test involves X-rays. Every effort is made to keep radiation to a minimum.

The special fluid contains iodine. If you are allergic to iodine we will not be able to carry out the test.

Results

The radiologist or senior radiographer will prepare a report of your examination which is usually ready within 48 hours. The report will be sent to the doctor who arranged for the test to be done and they will give you the result.

Further information

If you have further questions you can contact us on 0118 322 7991.

Further information can be found at <https://patient.info/health/hysterosalpingography>

More information is available on the Trust website: www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

Radiology Department, January 2018

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