

Home advice for patients who are due to undergo a Hysterosalpingogram

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What is a Hysterosalpingogram (HSG)?

This is an outpatient examination carried out in the X-Ray Department at the James Paget University Hospital. The HSG checks on whether or not your fallopian tubes are open. It may also give some information on the shape of the inside of your womb.

How long will the examination take?

The examination will take about 30 minutes.

What preparation will I need?

HSGs are usually carried out after you have finished your period and before Day 12 of a regular menstrual cycle i.e. before ovulation occurs. This is because **it is important to know that there is no possibility that a pregnancy is in its early stages. Please do not have unprotected intercourse between the first day of your period and this investigation.** The test is sometimes carried out later in your cycle providing there is no possibility of pregnancy within that cycle.

It is also important that your menstrual bleeding has stopped. If you are still bleeding, we will be unable to perform the examination.

In order to arrange the date for the procedure you will have to phone the infertility secretary on **01493 453986** as soon as possible so that she can plan.

If you suspect that you have an infection in the vagina before the date of the HSG then you must telephone the fertility sister on **01493 452366** to arrange an appointment at the fertility clinic so that swabs can be taken and antibiotics prescribed. **You must not have the HSG if you have an infection in the vagina.**

What does a Hysterosalpingogram involve?

Before your test you will be shown to a private cubicle where you can remove your clothes and your underwear and put on a hospital gown. You will be given a dressing gown, or you may bring your own from home if you prefer. You will be brought into the x-ray room and the procedure will be explained to you. You will then be asked to lie on your back on the x-ray table and bring your legs up into a 'frog' position.

Your consultant will place a speculum in your vagina so that the cervix can be seen. A soft, thin catheter is then placed through the cervical opening into the uterine cavity. A clear, sticky x-ray dye is then slowly injected through the catheter into the uterine cavity. X-ray pictures are taken as the uterine cavity is filling and as the fallopian tubes fill and begin to spill into the abdominal cavity. Once this occurs the examination is complete and the instruments are removed from the cervix and the vagina.

What will the examination feel like?

You may experience some pain during the procedure similar to a period pain. **We recommend that you take Paracetamol, Ibuprofen or a similar mild pain killer 1-2 hours before the procedure.** This is not because we expect you to have a lot of pain, but just to minimise anything you do experience.

Will I notice anything different after the test?

After the test you will notice that you are a little sticky from the x-ray dye. You should be able to go home shortly after the HSG but **you should be accompanied.** You may want to go back to work in the afternoon, but see how you feel after the HSG. You may have minor vaginal bleeding 2-3 days following the investigation.

There should be no significant pain afterwards, but if there is or pain is increasing and you have a vaginal discharge, there is a chance that you have developed a pelvic infection. You should contact your GP as you may need a course of antibiotics. If you do have concerns you may also contact the fertility sister.

When will I get my results?

It is often possible to tell you at the time of the HSG whether the fallopian tubes are open, but sometimes it is necessary to await the typed report on the HSG which will be produced by a consultant radiologist a week or so later. Arrangements for a follow-up appointment in the Fertility Clinic or the need for further tests will be discussed with you at the time of the HSG. We normally write to your GP about the results.

If you have unresolved questions, please raise these with the fertility clinic staff. It is important that you do not undergo this investigation unless you are fully informed of the indications and possible outcome.

The telephone number of the fertility clinic is 01493 452366 for enquiries; Monday to Thursday between 8.30am and 4.30pm. There is a messaging service available for out-of-hours or if staff are unavailable.

Feedback

We want your visit to be as comfortable as possible. Please talk to the person in charge if you have any concerns. If the ward/department staff are unable to resolve your concern, please ask for our Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) information. Please be assured that raising a concern will not impact on your care. **Before you leave the hospital you will be asked to complete a Friends and Family Test feedback card.** Providing your feedback is vital in helping to transform NHS services and to support patient choice.

Trust Values

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Courtesy and respect• A welcoming and positive attitude• Polite, friendly and interested in people• Value and respect people as individuals
So people feel welcomeAttentively kind and helpful• Look out for dignity, privacy & humanity• Attentive, responsive & take time to help• Visible presence of staff to provide care
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So people feel in controlEffective and professional• Safe, knowledgeable and reassuring• Effective care / services from joined up teams• Organised and timely, looking to improve
So people feel safe |
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The hospital can arrange for an interpreter or person to sign to assist you in communicating effectively with staff during your stay. Please let us know.

For a large print version of this leaflet, contact PALS 01493 453240