

Patient information factsheet

Hysterosalpingogram (HSG)

We have written this factsheet to give you more information about having a hysterosalpingogram (HSG). It explains what a HSG is, what the procedure involves and what the possible benefits and risks are. We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you may have. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to a member of your healthcare team.

This factsheet aims to supplement the discussions you will have with your doctor.

What is a hysterosalpingogram (HSG)?

A HSG is a special x-ray test that looks inside your womb (uterus) and fallopian tubes. It aims to show whether your womb is normal and if your fallopian tubes are blocked or damaged.

A HSG is performed during the first stage of your menstrual cycle once you have stopped bleeding (usually around day six to 14). Your cycle starts on the day you first start to bleed.

Why might I need this procedure?

We usually recommend this procedure for women who are having difficulty becoming pregnant. The procedure can diagnosis fibroids, polyps, scar tissue and other problems with the womb, which may explain why you have not been able to get pregnant. It will also help your doctor to decide what the most appropriate treatment is for you.

Who has made the decision that a HSG may be appropriate for me?

Your doctors have discussed your case with us and we have decided that this procedure is suitable for you. However, we will only proceed with the procedure with your written consent.

Who will perform the procedure?

The procedure will be performed by a specially trained doctor called an interventional radiologist. Interventional radiologists have specialist expertise in using x-ray equipment and interpreting the images produced.

Where will the procedure take place?

The procedure will take place in the radiology department, in a specially adapted x-ray theatre.

How should I prepare for the procedure?

Arrange an appointment

On the first day of your next menstrual cycle (period), please contact our interventional radiology department to arrange an appointment. If this falls over a weekend, please contact the office on Monday morning.

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Interventional radiology department
Telephone: **023 8120 6981** (Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm)

Urine sample

When you come in for your procedure, we will ask you to provide a urine sample. This is so we can check you are not pregnant. We will not be able to perform the procedure if there is any possibility that you may be pregnant. For this reason, you must not have sexual intercourse from the first day of your menstrual cycle up until the day after your procedure.

Allergies

Please let us know before your procedure if you have any allergies, or if you have previously reacted to intravenous contrast medium (the dye used for x-rays and CT scans).

Pain relief medication

The procedure is not painful, but it may be slightly uncomfortable. We recommend you take some over-the-counter pain relief medication, such as paracetamol or ibuprofen-based products, an hour before your procedure to help minimise any discomfort. Always read the label or instructions before taking any medications.

What will happen during the procedure?

After you have provided a urine sample, we will ask you to change into a hospital gown. We will then give you an oral antibiotic tablet to prevent any potential infection.

We will then take you into one of our special screening rooms and ask you to lie flat on your back on an x-ray table. We will place a monitoring device on your finger.

The procedure is similar to a cervical screening (smear test). We will gently insert a speculum (a smooth, tube-shaped tool) and a special catheter (a thin, plastic tube) into your cervix (neck of your womb). We will then inject a contrast medium through the catheter and take some x-ray pictures as the contrast medium fills your womb and fallopian tubes.

How long will the procedure take?

The procedure usually takes between 10 and 20 minutes.

What will happen after the procedure?

Recovery

We will take you back to the radiology day unit to rest for a little while. When you feel ready, you will be able to go home. Please expect to be in the unit for about an hour in total.

Going home

You can return to your normal activities, including driving, as soon as you feel able to.

The contrast medium will pass out of your body in your urine (pee).

Are there any risks or complications?

A HSG is a safe procedure. However, as with any medical procedure, there are some potential risks and complications.

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Exposure to radiation

All x-ray procedures involve exposure to varying amounts of radiation. Radiation increases your risk of cancer, but for this procedure, the risk has been assessed as low. We will not expose you to any more radiation than is necessary. We consider that the benefit to you from the procedure outweighs the low risk from the radiation.

Infection

There is a small risk that you may develop an infection after the procedure. To help minimise this risk, we will give you a dose of antibiotics before the procedure.

Contact us immediately if you experience any of the symptoms below:

- pain
- offensive-smelling vaginal discharge
- a fever

Bleeding

You may experience a small amount of bleeding (spotting) and discharge for a few days after the procedure. This is normal. Do not use tampons or menstrual cups during this time, only sanitary towels. Tampons may increase your risk of developing an infection.

If you experience heavy persistent bleeding, please contact us.

Cramping

You may experience some mild period-like cramps for two to three hours after the procedure. You can take over-the-counter pain relief medication, such as paracetamol or ibuprofen-based products, to help with this. Always read the label or instructions before taking any medications.

We will discuss all possible side effects with you before your procedure.

When will I receive my results?

We will be able to give you your results straight after the procedure.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

Interventional radiology clinical nurse specialist team

Telephone: **023 8120 1329** (Monday to Friday, 8am to 5.30pm)

If you have any medical concerns outside of these hours, please contact your GP, NHS **111**, or go to your nearest emergency department.

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