

Having a hysterosalpingogram (HSG) in the x-ray department

X-ray department Patient information

Introduction

This leaflet explains the procedure known as an HSG. It will describe what the procedure involves and the possible risks that may arise from the procedure. This is not meant to replace informed discussion between you and your doctor, but can act as a starting point for such discussion.

You will be sent an appointment letter with a date and time of your examination. This letter will confirm the location of your examination, which may be at the Poole hospital site or the Royal Bournemouth hospital site.

What is an HSG?

An HSG is a procedure to view the reproductive tract (uterus/womb and fallopian tubes). To enable this, a contrast (liquid) is injected through a catheter into the uterus/womb.

Why is the examination performed?

An HSG procedure is used to determine if there are any apparent abnormalities in the shape or size of the uterus and if the fallopian tubes are open or blocked. This may explain why you have not been able to become pregnant and help the doctor decide the most appropriate treatment for you.

When will the examination happen?

The examination must be undertaken within 10 days from the start of your last menstrual period, but not while you are actively bleeding. Usually between day five and day ten. If your period starts in the evening, then this still counts as your first day. Do not have sexual intercourse from the day of your first period and until after the procedure. We will also perform a pregnancy test before the examination is carried out.

Your doctor will have asked for a chlamydia test to be arranged. Your appointment can not be booked until the results of this test have been made available.

When would the examination not be able to happen?

The examination will not happen if you are still actively bleeding, or if there is a suspicion of a pelvic infection. If you have had allergic reactions to contrast (a type of dye) used in previous x-ray procedures, please tell your referring doctor or the x-ray department before coming to the examination.

How long will the examination take?

The examination will take approximately 20 to 30 minutes in total. This includes discussion before your examination.

How do I make an appointment?

On the first day of your next period, please telephone the x-ray department to book your appointment (0300 019 6792). If you start your period over the weekend, please phone on Monday morning. You will be asked for the date of the first day of your last period and your appointment will be booked within 10 days from this date.

What will happen when I arrive at the x-ray department?

Your letter will tell you where to come for the procedure. Please report to the reception desk in the x-ray department. You will be escorted to a small separate waiting room in the department, where there is a private changing room for you undress and access to a toilet. You will be given a hospital gown and asked to undress and remove your clothing from the waist down (except your shoes). The gown covers your front and back.

You may bring your own dressing gown and slippers.

There will be a basket in the changing room for you to place your belongings in. You will then be asked to wait in the small waiting room just outside the changing room.

As a pregnancy test will be performed, we will provide you with a specimen pot to collect a urine sample. Please do not empty your bladder prior to the examination.

If you wear a hearing aid, it may be left in place.

Who will perform the procedure?

The procedure will be performed by a specially trained advanced practice radiographer or a radiologist (doctor), who have specialist expertise in carrying out the procedure and interpreting the images produced.

What happens before the procedure?

A radiographer, nurse, or nursing assistant will show you into the x-ray room. The equipment may look intimidating, but there is no need for anxiety. Due to the nature of the procedure, the number of staff present in the x-ray room will be kept to a minimum. Your dignity will be maintained at all times.

You will be asked to confirm the date of your last period and sign a disclaimer form. Please bring this date with you. You will be asked if you suffer from any allergies.

The advanced practice radiographer or radiologist (doctor), who will be performing the procedure, will explain the procedure and answer any queries or concerns that you may have.

What happens during the examination?

You will be asked to lie on your back on the x-ray table in a position similar to that used for a cervical smear.

A speculum will be inserted into the vagina to enable the radiographer/radiologist to see where your cervix is.

A soft catheter (hollow tube) will be passed through the cervix into the uterus and held in place by a small balloon.

The x-ray machine will be moved into place above your abdomen.

A small quantity of contrast (approximately 15mls) will be injected into the uterus/womb.

The radiographer/radiologist will follow the progress of the contrast on a monitor. During the procedure you may be asked to roll from side to side to ensure that the womb and fallopian tubes have been seen.

The procedure may cause some mild discomfort, similar to period pain, as the contrast fills the uterus/womb and fallopian tubes. This should settle once the procedure is complete.

What happens after the procedure?

Some leakage of the contrast may occur immediately after the procedure. A sanitary towel will be provided. DO NOT use tampons for a few days after the procedure, as this may increase your risk of developing an infection.

If you experience 'period pain' following your procedure, we suggest you take painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen.

You will be asked to stay in the department for 10 minutes after your procedure has been completed. You can return to normal activities, including driving, as soon as you feel able to.

What are the risks of the procedure?

This is a safe procedure, however, as with any procedures there are small risks, although these are extremely rare:

Bleeding: you may experience slight spotting after the procedure, this is normal. If this becomes heavy bleeding, please seek medical advice e.g. from your GP, 111 or the emergency department.

Infection: in rare cases, there is a small risk that you may develop an infection after the procedure. If you experience any of the symptoms below, phone 111 or the emergency department, as you may need a course of antibiotics.

- pain
- fever/temperature
- unusual vaginal discharge/offensive smelling discharge

Radiation exposure: all x-ray procedures involve exposure to radiation in varying amounts. In all x-ray examinations the amount of radiation is kept to the minimum necessary.

Contrast: the contrast dye that is used contains iodine. This can cause some people side effects. Side effects are rare. If you have had any previous side effects to x-ray contrast, please let us know.

When will I receive the results of my procedure?

The advanced practice radiographer/radiologist will study the x-ray images in detail and make a diagnosis. The doctor who referred you for the procedure will discuss the results of your procedure and possible treatment at your next appointment.

Can I bring a relative/friend?

Some individuals like to have someone accompany them to the hospital and drive them home afterwards.

Is there an alternative procedure?

There may be alternative procedure available. However, this has been considered to be the most appropriate test for you at the moment.

Who should I contact for more information?

If you have any queries or concerns that have not been answered by this leaflet, please contact the x-ray department on **0300 019 6792**.

Would you find a translator beneficial?

If you found reading this leaflet difficult and do not understand fully and require a translator for your procedure, please contact the x-ray department on **0300 019 6792**.

We can supply this in other formats or in larger print.

For more information, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS):

- Call **0300 019 4886**
- Email **uhd.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net**.

To read this leaflet in a different language,
please visit our website: **www.uhd.nhs.uk/visit/patient-information-leaflets**
and use the language and accessibility function available along the top of the site.

To ask for this leaflet in larger print, please contact the patient experience team on **0300 019 8499**
or email **uhd.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net**.

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