

Hysterosalpinogram (HSG) X-Ray

Patient Information

What is a HSG and why do I need one?

A HSG is a special x-ray examination to show whether your uterus (womb) is normal and if your fallopian tubes are open. This will help the doctors find the cause of your problems eg. Why you are not getting pregnant, and to decide the appropriate treatment for you. Prior to the test you will be asked to do a chlamydia swab to check for any infections. If an infection is identified we will contact you to arrange treatment. Once you have been treated , you will need to have another swab prior to having the HSG to check the infection has cleared.

How is it done?

The procedure will involve lying on a special x-ray table in a position similar to when you have a smear test. A speculum will be placed into the vagina and a thin tube will help us inject some x-ray “dye” into the uterus and hopefully through the fallopian tubes. We take x-ray pictures as we inject the “dye”. This will take approximately 10 minutes

After the test

We will give you a sanitary pad to place in your underwear after the procedure as you may experience some light vaginal bleeding and period like pains few hours after the test. The small amount of “dye” we use will also leak out onto the pad. The “dye” is clear but can be sticky. **Please only use pads, not tampons if needed.**

Will it hurt?

Some people can find the procedure uncomfortable, some not at all.

Occasionally forceps need to be applied to the cervix. If this is necessary you may feel some discomfort but this will wear off quickly.

When the “dye” is injected, you may feel a period type pain, which lasts around 30 seconds and usually fades as soon as the examination is completed.

As the test can be uncomfortable, it is suggested that you take painkillers e.g Paracetamol or Nurofen 2 hours before the test and following the procedure if necessary. If any discomfort persists after 24 hours, please contact your G.P.

The Radiographers can and will stop at any point during the procedure if you are finding that it is too uncomfortable.

What will I be told on the day?

The Radiographers will see the x-ray pictures and may give a provisional indication of what the test has shown. These comments may differ from the final report which is issued by a consultant Radiologist. The final results will be sent to your referring doctor. Your results will be discussed at your follow up clinic appointment. If you do not have a follow up appointment with your consultant, you will need to contact the clinic to tell them you have had this test and arrange an appointment. Please email Cav.Gynae.Fertility@wales.nhs.uk to arrange this.

Possible risks from the procedure?

If you are pregnant: The procedure could cause a miscarriage and the x-rays could harm a developing baby. This is why your appointment, if possible is booked after a period and before usual ovulation times.

Infection: The risk of an infection following the procedure is approximately 1 in 100 cases. If we feel that you are at particular risk or it is shown that there is a hydrosalpinx, you maybe prescribed antibiotics following the procedure. **Signs of infection may be unusual vaginal discharge, pain, heavier than expected bleeding or a raised temperature. If one or more of these occur, please see your GP or contact NHS 111 or CAV 24/7.**

Allergies: It is extremely rare to have an allergic reaction to the x-ray “dye” but please inform the Radiographer if you are aware of any allergies you may have.

Fainting: Occasionally you may feel faint during or after the procedure, we always advise you to lie down after the procedure for a few minutes at the end of the exam. It is rare to actually faint.

How to make an appointment?

The X-Ray department will send you a contact letter to make an appointment. If you do not have regular or normal periods, please inform the department so that a suitable appointment can be made.

It is important that we do not do this procedure you if there is ANY chance of you being pregnant. Therefore we ask that you DO NOT have sexual intercourse from the start of your period until after the procedure.