



Imaging department

Booking your hysterosalpingogram (HSG)

Information for patients, relatives and carers

Please read this leaflet **before** booking the appointment for your hysterosalpingogram (HSG).

What is an HSG?

- An HSG is a type of x-ray that allows the doctor to see inside your womb and your fallopian tubes.
- Your fallopian tubes' job is to carry an egg from your ovaries (where your eggs are stored) to your womb.
- During the HSG, the doctor will take x-rays to see if everything is working correctly.

Why are HSGs performed?

- When a doctor wants to find out why a person is having difficulty getting pregnant or miscarrying, they might do an HSG.
- This x-ray can help the doctor see if there are any problems with your fallopian tubes (blockages or damage) or your womb (polyps, scarring or fibroids).
- By doing this test, the doctor hopes to learn more about what might be causing the difficulties.

When does a HSG take place?

- Your cycle begins on the first day of your period. The HSG x-ray is usually done between days 6 and 15 of your cycle, but **not** when you are still bleeding.
- Sometimes, if you have a very long or irregular cycle, or if you don't have periods at all, the doctor will create a special plan to fit in with your individual cycle.

Important Information

- We **cannot** do the HSG x-ray if there is any chance you might be pregnant.
- **You must not have sex from the first day of your period until after the HSG appointment.**
- If you have sex once your period has started, it might not be possible to do your HSG x-ray.



How can I book my appointment?

- On the first day of your period (or Monday after a weekend), you must telephone the fertility team to make an HSG appointment. **020 7288 3776**.
- **On the day of your appointment, you must have stopped bleeding.**
- If you are still bleeding on the day of your HSG appointment, please call the imaging department on **020 7288 5685**. They will help you rearrange the x-ray for another day when you are not bleeding.

What happens during the appointment?

- Your HSG appointment will take place in the imaging (radiology/x-ray) department on level 3, Whittington Hospital.
- Let the staff on the reception desk know that you have arrived.
- You will be asked to change into a hospital gown.
- A sample pot will be given to you for a urine (pee) sample. This is to check if you are pregnant.
- You will be taken to the examination room.
- The clinician who will do the HSG will talk to you and explain everything about the procedure. They will answer any questions you might have.
- The procedure is like a smear test. The clinician will pass a speculum (device to open your vagina) and a special catheter (tube) into your cervix (neck of womb). A clear contrast liquid (which shows up on x-rays) will then be passed into the womb, through the catheter.
- As the liquid fills the womb and fallopian tubes, X-ray pictures will be taken.
- The procedure usually takes between 10 and 20 minutes.

Will it hurt?

- During the procedure, you might feel a bit uncomfortable, and you could have mild cramps that feel like period pains.
- You can take a painkiller about an hour before the procedure to help with any discomfort.
- Just let the clinician know if you have any questions or if you're feeling uncomfortable during the process.

What happens after the procedure?

- Depending on how you feel, you can go home or back to work right after the procedure.
- You might have mild cramps for about two to three hours after the procedure, this is normal. If you need to, you can take painkillers to help with the discomfort.
- After the procedure, you might notice some clear liquid in your underwear or see a little bit of light bleeding or spotting. Don't worry, this is normal and nothing to be concerned about.
- If you need to, use pads or panty liners to stay comfortable. Do not use tampons on the day of the procedure because they could increase the chance of getting an infection.



Is there anything I need to watch out for at home?

If you experience any of the following, contact your consultant, GP, the hospital where you had your HSG, or go to your nearest A&E:

- a high temperature or fever
- on-going heavy bleeding
- vaginal discharge that smells bad
- severe or increasing pain that does not go away with regular painkillers.

Are there any risks involved in having this procedure?

- The clinician will do everything they can to keep you safe and comfortable. However, as with all medical procedures, there are some risks which your clinician will talk to you about.
- There is a small risk of infection after the procedure.
- There is an extremely small chance of having an allergic reaction to the contrast liquid used. If you notice a rash, itching, or swelling after the test, you must tell your GP or call NHS 111.
- Very rarely, the contrast liquid might accidentally enter the blood vessels in the womb. If that happens, the doctors will stop the test.
- Sometimes, the iodine in the contrast liquid can affect the thyroid gland. If the clinicians know you have thyroid problems that are not being treated, they will not do the test.

Are there any alternatives to this test?

- An HSG x-ray is an effective procedure. There are other options too, like a special ultrasound called HyCoSy, a laparoscopy, or a hysteroscopy. Your doctor will talk to you about these choices and help you decide which one is right for you.

Any further questions?

- Please phone the **Fertility Nurse on 020 7288 3776** or email our team on whh-tr.FertilityUnit-WhittHealth@nhs.net



Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or whh-tr.PALS@nhs.net

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please email whh-tr.patient-information@nhs.net. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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