

HYSTEROSALPINGOGRAM

What is a hysterosalpingogram (HSG)?

An HSG is an x-ray procedure used to see whether the fallopian tubes are patent (open) and if the inside of the uterus (uterine cavity) is normal. HSG is an outpatient procedure that usually takes less than 5 minutes to perform. It is usually done after the menstrual period ends but before ovulation (cycle days 5-10).

How is an HSG done?

A woman is positioned under a fluoroscope (x-ray imager that can take pictures during the study) on a table. The gynecologist or radiologist then examines the patient's uterus and places a speculum in her vagina. Her cervix is cleaned, and a device (cannula) is placed into the opening of the cervix. The doctor gently fills the uterus with a liquid containing iodine (a fluid that can be seen by x-ray) through the cannula. The contrast will be seen as white on the image and can show the contour of the uterus as the liquid travels from the cannula, into the uterus, and through the fallopian tubes. As the contrast enters the tubes, it outlines the length of the tubes and spills out their ends if they are open. Abnormalities inside the uterine cavity may also be detected by the doctor observing the x-ray images when the fluid movement is disrupted by the abnormality. The HSG procedure is not designed to evaluate the ovaries or to diagnose endometriosis, nor can it identify fibroids that are outside of the endometrial cavity, either in the muscular part of the uterus or on the outside of the uterus. Often, side views of the uterus and tubes are obtained by having the woman change her position on the table. After the HSG, a woman can immediately return to normal activities, although some doctors can immediately return to normal activities, although some doctors ask that she refrain from intercourse for a few days.

Where is an HSG done?

HSGs are typically done at the hospital or a radiology clinic. The physicians at Audubon Fertility perform HSGs at Audubon Surgery Center located at 2701 Napoleon Avenue in New Orleans.

Is it uncomfortable?

An HSG usually causes mild or moderate uterine cramping for about 5-10 minutes. However, some women may experience cramps for several hours. These symptoms can be greatly reduced by taking medications used for menstrual cramps before the procedure or when they occur. You can take ibuprofen 800 mg 30-60 minutes before your scheduled HSG. This can be over the counter Advil. If you are not able to take aspirin or ibuprofen you can take two acetaminophen (Tylenol) tablets.

Does a hysterosalpingogram enhance fertility?

It is controversial whether this procedure enhances fertility. Some studies show a slight increase in fertility lasting about 3 months after a normal HSG. However, most doctors perform HSG only for diagnostic reasons.

What are the risks and complications of HSG?

HSG is considered a very safe procedure. However, there is a set of recognized complications, some serious, which occur less than 1% of the time.

Infection – The most common serious problem with HSG is pelvic infection. This usually occurs when a woman has had previous tubal disease (such as a past infection of chlamydia). In rare cases, infection can damage the fallopian tubes or make it necessary to remove them. A woman should call her doctor if she experiences increasing pain or a fever within 1-2 days of the HSG.

Fainting – Rarely the woman may get light-headed during or shortly after the procedure.

Radiation Exposure – Radiation exposure from an HSG is very low, less than with a kidney or

bowel study. This exposure has not been shown to cause harm even if a woman conceives later the same month. The HSG should not be done if pregnancy is suspected.

Iodine Allergy – Rarely a woman may have an allergy to the iodine contrast used in HSG. A woman should inform her doctor if she is allergic to iodine, intravenous contrast dyes, or seafood. Women who are allergic to iodine should have the HSG procedure performed without an iodine-containing contrast solution. If a woman experiences a rash, itching, or swelling after the procedure, she should contact her doctor.

Spotting – Spotting sometimes occurs for 1-2 days after HSG. Unless instructed otherwise, a woman should notify her doctor if she experiences heavy bleeding after HSG.

What is the next step if my tubes are blocked?

If your tubes are blocked, your doctor will likely recommend either a surgical procedure to directly view the tubes (laparoscopy or hysteroscopy) or to bypass the tubes and perform in vitro fertilization (IVF). This is a complex decision that should be discussed with your doctor.

Are there other options to evaluate tubal patency?

Laparoscopy can also determine if tubes are open using a procedure called chromopertubation. Laparoscopy is a surgery that is more invasive than an HSG. It involves inserted a lighted camera through the belly button under general anesthesia.

Do I need to stop any medications the day of my HSG?

If you are taking Glucophage or metformin you should stop this medication 24 hours prior to your HSG. You may resume the day following the HSG.

Also please do not wear any perfumes or scented lotions to your HSG procedure.

If this is your first time coming to this facility we would like you to complete an online medical history questionnaire.

Instructions for online registration

1. Go online to www.simpleadmit.com
2. Click the button "Patients Start Here."
3. Enter the following password: **"VHNO504NEW"**
4. Please complete the medical history form at least one week prior to your procedure. If you are a returning patient and have already completed this online form within the past year, you do not need to do so again.

**** PLEASE MAKE SURE TO ARRIVE 30 MINUTES BEFORE YOU SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT TIME ****