

# Having an X-ray test of your uterus and fallopian tubes (hysterosalpingogram)

Radiology Department

Information for Patients

Last reviewed: October 2025

Next review: October 2028

Leaflet number: 10 Version: 8

## Introduction

**Please read your appointment letter carefully to check which hospital your appointment is at. This leaflet tells you about your X-ray test. Please read it carefully as it has important information and instructions.**

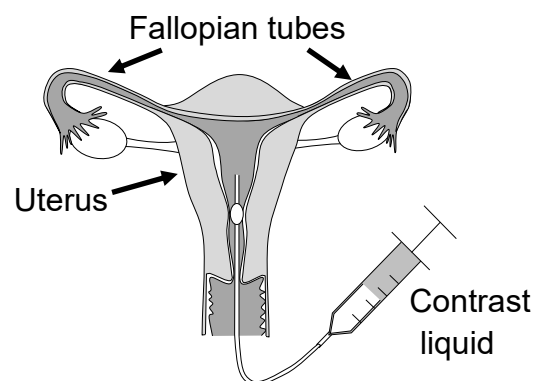
## What is a hysterosalpingogram?

A hysterosalpingogram (pronounced hiss-ter-oh-sal-ping-oh-gram) is a special X-ray exam. We take X-ray pictures of a woman's womb (uterus) and fallopian (uterine) tubes. It is also known as a 'salp' or '**HSG**' for short. We use a liquid (contrast) that shows up on X-rays.

We do this test to look at:

- the size and shape of the uterus
- if the fallopian tubes are open or not

Your doctor will have talked to you about your symptoms. They have decided that this is the best test for your particular problem.



## What are the benefits of having a hysterosalpingogram (HSG)?

- It does not need an anaesthetic or stay in hospital.
- This test shows if there are any blockages in your fallopian tubes.
- The test may give some information about your womb.
- The results will help your consultant to make a diagnosis about your problem.

**Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit [www.uhleicester.nhs.uk](http://www.uhleicester.nhs.uk) for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals.  
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact [uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net](mailto:uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net)

## How do I get ready for my HSG?

- **Chlamydia test:** chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection (STI). It is one of the most common STIs in the UK. You will need to have had a vaginal swab test to check for chlamydia. This must be done within the last 6 months before your HSG appointment can be booked. If you have not had this test, please contact your GP to arrange this as soon as possible.

You need to be clear of chlamydia when you have your HSG test. **If we do not have your results we will not be able to book an appointment for you.**

- **Your menstrual periods and making sure you are not pregnant:** The HSG test should usually be done within the first 10 days of your menstrual cycle. When you come for your HSG appointment we will ask you the date of your last menstrual period. Please bring this information with you.

**It is very important that there is no chance of pregnancy at the time of your HSG. This is because X-rays may harm an unborn child. You must not have sex (sexual intercourse) between your last period and your HSG. This is to avoid any chance of pregnancy.** Before the your HSG begins we will ask you to confirm that you are not pregnant.

- **On the day of your HSG test: Please eat and drink as normal before your test.** Some patients find it helpful to **take a simple painkiller** (such as paracetamol and/ or ibuprofen) about 30 minutes before the appointment time. This will not interfere with the test in any way. It may help with any discomfort during the HSG test.

You may find it helpful for someone to drive you home after your HSG test.

Please bring a sanitary towel (menstrual pad) with you. This is to use after your test.

## What should I do if I have irregular periods or no periods?

Please tell us by calling the Radiology Department. The phone number to call is in your appointment letter and at the end of this leaflet. We may ask you to contact your referring GP or consultant. They might recommend some more tests to make sure you are not pregnant.

## What happens during the HSG test?

- When you get to the Radiology Department you will be directed to the waiting area.
- We will show you to a cubicle. You will undress and change into a hospital gown.
- We will talk to you about the HSG test. We will ask you to sign a form to confirm that you are not pregnant. This may happen in the X-ray room. You may ask any questions that you have about the HSG test.
- We will take you into the X-ray room. We will ask you to lie on the X-ray table.
- We do an internal vaginal examination with a speculum. This is similar to having a cervical screening (smear) test.
- We will put a small tube into your cervix. You may get a cramp-like feeling as the tube is put in.

- We will put a small amount of a colourless liquid (contrast) through the tube. The liquid goes into your uterus and fallopian tubes. Contrast shows up on X-ray pictures.
- We will take some X-ray pictures. We will see where the contrast has gone in your uterus and fallopian tubes.
- You may feel some discomfort during the HSG test. The pain is rarely severe. You should tell us if it gets very uncomfortable. You will not have any sedation for the HSG test.

## Who will be doing the HSG test?

- This test will be done by a doctor who specialises in diagnosis using X-rays (radiologist) or specialist nurse or specialist radiographer.
- A radiographer and sometimes a nurse or assistant will be in the room. They will help you and the person doing the test.
- A student may also be in the room. If you do not want this, you can ask that the student is not in the room for your test.

## How long will it take?

This HSG test takes between 15 to 20 minutes. The time will vary slightly for each patient.

## What happens after the HSG test?

- We may ask you to wait in the department for a short time after your test. This is to make sure that you feel comfortable.
- Any contrast liquid that is still in your uterus will slowly leak out through your vagina. Any contrast liquid left in your pelvis will be absorbed safely by your body. Only a small amount of contrast is used during the test. It has no smell or colour.
- You may get some cramping and minor 'spotting' (light bleeding) after the test. Both should settle in a couple of days. We will give you a sanitary towel to use after the test. You may like to bring your own. **Do not use tampons during this time. They can be a source of infection.**

## Are there any side effects or complications?

**Most women get only minor side effects. These may include:**

- sticky vaginal discharge. This can happen as some of the fluid drains out of the uterus
- slight vaginal bleeding
- cramps
- feeling dizzy, faint or sick.

**Serious problems are rare. They may include:**

- allergic reaction to the contrast liquid
- injury to the uterus (including perforation)
- pelvic infection
- rarely, if you have long term infection of the fallopian tubes the injection of the contrast liquid can make this worse.



**You should contact your doctor or call the NHS helpline on 111 if you are unwell after the test. This is very important if you have any of these symptoms:**

- being sick (vomiting) or fainting
- severe tummy pain or cramping
- heavy vaginal bleeding
- high temperature (fever) or shivering (chills)

## How do I get the results?

You will not get the results right away. We will look at your X-ray pictures again. We will send your results to the doctor who referred you for this test.

Your report will go on the NHS App after an inbuilt delay. Your GP or hospital doctor may have your report before you. These reports are medically technical reports. They are written for the referrer to help to make a diagnosis and pick treatment options. If you have any questions or concerns, please talk to your referring clinician.

## What are the risks from radiation in this test?

The main risk from exposure to X-rays is a higher risk of getting a cancer in the future. This risk is thought to be very small. We are all exposed to natural background radiation every day of our lives. This comes from the sun, food we eat, and the ground. Each test that uses X-rays gives a dose on top of this natural background radiation. The risks from radiation are slightly higher for an unborn child so we must ask you about your menstrual periods and chance of being pregnant.

The radiation from the X-rays during a HSG test is equivalent to receiving a few weeks of natural background radiation. The benefits of this test are likely to outweigh any possible risk. The risks of not having the test could be greater. We try to keep your exposure to X-rays as low as possible.

## What if I need to talk to someone?

**If you have any questions or concerns, or cannot make the appointment:**

Please call the Radiology department on **0116 258 8765** and select **option 7**. Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm, but not on bank holidays.



اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔  
على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل  
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

Previous reference:

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email [uhl-tr.equalitymailbox@nhs.net](mailto:uhl-tr.equalitymailbox@nhs.net)