

## INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

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# Undergoing a hysterosalpingogram

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Your gynaecologist has advised you to have a hysterosalpingogram (HSG) examination. This leaflet aims to explain the procedure and answer any queries you may have.

A hysterosalpingogram is an x-ray procedure to view the inside of the uterus (womb) and the fallopian tubes.

The x-ray pictures can show abnormalities of the uterus, as well as problems with the tubes, such as blockage.

### **Preparation for the examination**

Your gynaecologist will have already discussed with you the reason for the examination.

You will have been given a prescription for antibiotics in clinic, which you will need to collect from a pharmacy prior to the date of the examination and bring them with you for your appointment.

The hysterosalpingogram examination can only be done between day 10 and day 14 of your menstrual cycle. Day one is counted as the day your period starts. Therefore, it is important you telephone the x-ray department on the first day of your period or as close to the start of your period as possible if it falls on a weekend or public holiday.

The telephone number to ring is 01623 672238 between 8.30am and 5pm.

We will then try to arrange an appointment with you, but it might not always be possible to give you an appointment for that month. If this is the case, we will ask you to telephone again at the start of your next and further periods until a suitable date is arranged.

If you have infrequent periods, we will arrange for two pregnancy tests, two weeks apart. Your gynaecologist will let us know if we need to organise this with you.

**Once you have an appointment date, it is very important to avoid any risk of pregnancy. You must refrain from having sexual intercourse, protected or otherwise, until after the examination has been done.**

### **On the day of the procedure**

You may eat and drink as normal.

Please leave any valuables at home. You are responsible for all personal items you bring into hospital and the Trust cannot accept responsibility for their loss or damage.

You may bring your partner or a friend with you to the department, but they will not be able to come into the x-ray room.

On arrival at the x-ray department, you will be asked to provide a urine sample for a pregnancy test.

If the pregnancy test is negative you will be taken to the examination room and asked to change into an examination gown.

The procedure will normally take between 20 and 30 minutes.

You will be introduced to the specialist staff and, in private, your details will be checked, including:

- That you have brought your antibiotics.
- Your menstrual cycle.
- That you have not had intercourse since your period started, protected or otherwise.
- Any allergies you might have.

The person performing the examination will be a specially trained doctor or nurse. They will explain the procedure to you, answer any questions you might have and confirm you are happy to proceed.

A radiographer will also be present to take the x-ray pictures. You will be asked to lie on the x-ray table and the doctor or nurse will insert a speculum into the vagina to locate the neck of the womb. This is similar to having a smear test.

A thin plastic tube or catheter is then passed into the womb and x-ray dye (contrast medium) is injected through the tube. A few x-ray pictures will be taken to record the appearances and the findings will be discussed with you.

Occasionally, if the fallopian tubes are not showing, you will be given a small intravenous injection of a smooth muscle relaxant. This stops any spasm in the tubes which might be preventing them from filling. This injection is only rarely necessary. It will not make you sleepy but may temporarily give you a dry mouth and you will be asked to remain in the department for 20 minutes following the procedure.

The x-ray dye is rather sticky, and you may have a little spotting afterwards. Therefore, once the examination is over, you will be given disposable wipes and a towel to wash yourself, and a sanitary towel to protect your clothes.

You will be given a cup of water to take all the antibiotics once we have completed the examination. We will ask you to remain in the department for 10 to 15 minutes; you may leave once we are assured you are happy to go.

### **Does it hurt?**

The examination is uncomfortable to a similar degree as period pains. It would be advisable to take two painkillers (paracetamol or equivalent) two hours before the appointment.

### **Risks from the procedure**

To minimise any risks, you will be asked a series of questions before the scan.

A small number of patients suffer allergic type reactions to the contrast medium. If you have and an injection of contrast medium you will need to remain in the department for up to 20 minutes following your scan. Such reactions are usually minor and settle quite quickly without treatment.

Your examination will be performed using the minimum amount of radiation necessary to produce the images needed to help your doctor diagnose your illness, injury or monitor the progress of your treatment.

We make sure that the benefits from having the examination outweigh the very low risk involved.

### **Further information**

If you have any questions that have not been answered by this leaflet, please ask the radiologist, radiographer, or nurse when you attend for your procedure.

## Contact details

If you have any concerns or require more information, please call 01623 672238.

## Further sources of information

NHS Choices: [www.nhs.uk/conditions](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions)

Our website: [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk](http://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk)

## Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns, or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

**King's Mill Hospital:** 01623 672222

**Newark Hospital:** 01636 685692

**Email:** [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net)

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net).

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.

External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet, please email [sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net) or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

To be completed by the Communications office  
Leaflet code: PIL202308-06-UHYS  
Created: November 2015 / Revised: August 2023 /  
Review Date: August 2025