

WHAT IS A HYSTEROSALPINGOGRAM?

The purpose of a hysterosalpingogram is to study the appearance of a woman's uterus and fallopian tubes. The test uses a special form of x-ray called fluoroscopy and a contrast material. A hysterosalpingogram is primarily used to examine women who have difficulty becoming pregnant by allowing the radiologist to evaluate the shape and structure of the uterus, the openness of the fallopian tubes, and any scarring within the uterine or peritoneal (abdominal) cavity.

HOW IT WORKS

Your ordering physician will order a pregnancy test prior to the test. This test will not be done if you are pregnant. The hysterosalpingogram procedure is best performed one week after menstruation but before ovulation to make certain that you are not pregnant during the exam. If you are diabetic please consult your physician as to any special instructions concerning your diabetes prior to the test. This procedure should not be performed if you have an active inflammatory condition. You should notify your physician or technologist if you have a chronic pelvic infection or an untreated sexually transmitted disease at the time of the procedure.

Please inform the technologist if you are allergic to iodine or any type of contrast agent.

WHAT TO EXPECT

The procedure is like a gynecological exam. The patient is positioned on her back on the exam table, with her knees bent or her feet held up with stirrups and a speculum is inserted into the vagina. The cervix is then cleansed, and a catheter is inserted into the cervix. The speculum is removed and the patient is carefully positioned underneath the fluoroscopy camera. The contrast material then begins to fill the uterine cavity, fallopian tubes and peritoneal cavity through the catheter and fluoroscopic images are taken. When the procedure is complete, the catheter will be removed and the patient will be allowed to sit up.

The test takes approximately one hour. There may be slight discomfort and cramping when the catheter is placed and the contrast material is injected, but it should not last long. There may also be slight irritation of the peritoneum, the lining of the abdominal cavity, causing generalized lower abdominal pain, but this should also be minimal and not long lasting. Most women experience vaginal spotting for a few days after the examination, which is normal.

HOW TO PREPARE

Follow these guidelines:

- Please bring your current home medications or a list of your medications with you the day of the test.
- You may be asked to change into a hospital gown.
- Remove jewelry, removable dental hardware, eye glasses, and any metal objects or clothing that might interfere with the images.

RESULTS

A radiologist will review your images and send a report to your doctor who ordered the test in 48 hours. You'll get a call from your doctor's office to discuss the results and next steps. To check your results in our secure, online patient portal, My UNC Chart, visit www.myuncchart.org.