

Hysterosalpingogram - HSG

A hysterosalpingogram (HSG) is an x-ray procedure performed to determine whether the fallopian tubes are open and to evaluate the shape of the uterine cavity.

An HSG is an outpatient procedure that takes less than a half-hour to perform. It is usually done during the first two weeks after menses have ended in order to prevent interference with an early pregnancy.

Risks and Benefits

An HSG allows the doctor to view the inside of the uterus and fallopian tubes. Scarring or abnormalities in the uterus or fallopian tubes can lead to infertility and pregnancy problems. HSG also is used after some tubal sterilization procedures to make sure that the fallopian tubes have been completely blocked.

An HSG usually causes mild or moderate uterine cramping for about five minutes; however, some women may experience cramps for several hours. The symptoms can be greatly reduced by taking medications used for menstrual cramps.

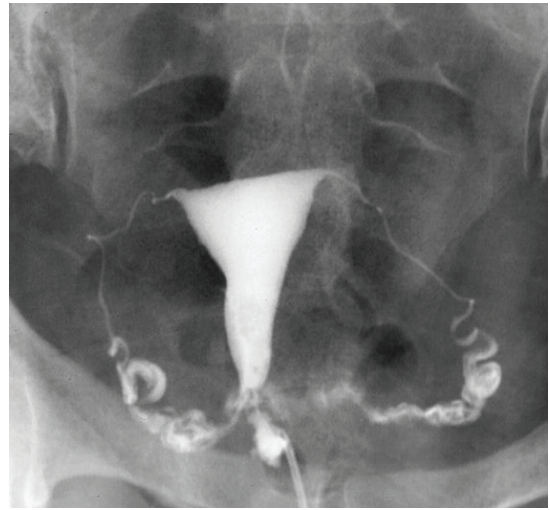
The most common serious problem with HSG is pelvic infection. This usually occurs in the presence of previous tubal disease. In rare cases, infection can damage the fallopian tubes or necessitate their removal. Rarely, the patient may get light-headed during or shortly after the procedure. Also, a patient may have an allergy to the iodine contrast used in an HSG. A patient should inform her doctor if she is allergic to iodine or intravenous contrast dyes.

How You Should Prepare

Your obstetrician-gynecologist (ob-gyn) may recommend that you take an over-the-counter pain reliever an hour before the procedure. Discuss this decision with your ob-gyn. In some cases, you also may receive an antibiotic for you to take before HSG.

Most people can drive themselves home after having HSG. But you may not feel well after the procedure, so you may want to make arrangements for someone to drive you home.

If you have an infection or if you are on antibiotics, the medication course must be complete prior to the procedure, to ensure that no infection remains.



What Happens During the Procedure

At North Star Radiology, we always do a urine pregnancy test before beginning your exam. After confirming the results are negative, you will lie on your back with your feet placed as if for a pelvic exam and an x-ray machine will be positioned over you. A speculum is inserted into the vagina, and the cervix is cleaned with betadine. A thin plastic tube is then passed into the cervical opening, and a small balloon is inflated to keep the tube in place in the uterus.

As contrast is injected through the tube, several x-rays will be taken of your uterus and tubes. The fluid may cause cramping. If the tubes are blocked, the fluid will cause them to stretch.

After the images are taken, the speculum and cannula or tube is removed.

After the Procedure

After an HSG, you can expect to have sticky vaginal discharge as some of the fluid drains out of the uterus. The fluid may be tinged with blood. A pad can be used for the vaginal discharge. Do not use a tampon. You also may have slight vaginal bleeding, cramps, and feel dizzy, faint, or sick to your stomach.

You should call your doctor if you experience increasing pain or a fever within one to two days of the HSG. Also call your doctor if you experience a rash, itching, or swelling after the procedure.

Spotting commonly occurs for one to two days after the HSG. Unless instructed otherwise, you should notify your doctor if you experience heavy bleeding after the HSG.