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HYSTEOSALPINGOGRAPHY (HSG)

Hysterosalpingography (HSG) is a fluoroscopic X-ray study of a woman's uterus and fallopian tubes. It involves insertion of a catheter into the cervix and instillation of a water soluble contrast material into the uterus and fallopian tubes.

The study is primarily used to examine women who have difficulty becoming pregnant by evaluate the shape and structure of the uterus, the openness of the fallopian tubes, and any scarring within the uterine or abdominal cavity. It is also performed to monitor the effects of tubal ligations and surgery.

PREPARATION

Generally there is no special preparation needed for this procedure. However, prior to the study you may take an anti-inflammatory medication (Aleve® or Motrin®). You may be asked to take a laxative or an enema the night prior to the procedure to empty your bowels so that the uterus and surrounding structures can be clearly seen.

THE PROCEDURE

An obstetrician/gynecologist performs the study with assistance from the radiologist. While lying on the X-ray table the obstetrician/gynecologist will place a speculum into the vagina, clean the cervix, and then insert a catheter into the cervix. The speculum is then removed. A water soluble contrast material is then slowly instilled to fill the uterine cavity, fallopian tubes and peritoneal cavity. As this occurs, fluoroscopic X-ray images are taken by the radiologist. These images are promptly reviewed and the catheter removed. There may be slight discomfort and cramping when the catheter is placed and the contrast material injected, but it should not last long.

The study usually is completed within 30 minutes.

AFTER THE EXAM

There may be slight generalized lower abdominal pain, but this should be minimal and not long lasting. Most women experience vaginal spotting for a few days after the study, which is normal.

Together, the radiologist and the obstetrician/gynecologist will analyze the images with the radiologist preparing a detailed report for your doctor. Your doctor or obstetrician/gynecologist will discuss these results with you and explain what they mean in relation to your health.

Note: Any woman who is pregnant, or thinks she might be, should let her doctor know before proceeding with the exam.