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DORSET FERTILITY

HYSTEOSALPINGOGRAM INFORMATION

You have been referred to the X Ray Department for a hysterosalpingogram (HSG). We hope that this will explain the examination and answer any questions you may have.

WHAT IS A HYSTEOSALPINGOGRAM

This is an X ray examination of your uterus and fallopian tubes. It is performed to determine whether the fallopian tubes are patent (open) and to see if the shape of the uterine cavity is normal. The radiologist, (X-Ray doctor) will inject a dye (known as contrast medium) into the uterus and watch it spill out of the fallopian tubes using the x-ray television (fluoroscope) to check that the fallopian tubes are patent.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE EXAMINATION?

This test is very similar to a cervical smear test. Before the procedure starts you will be asked to undress and put on a white gown and dressing gown.

Once inside the X-Ray room you will be asked to lie on the X-Ray couch on your back with your knees bent. The radiologist will then clear around the vagina with an antiseptic solution before inserting the speculum (this is the same instrument used for smear tests).

When this has been done, a very fine tube will be inserted through the cervix.. The contrast then enters the fallopian tubes and spills out of the end if they are open. The doctor observing the X ray images may detect abnormalities within the uterine cavity. Frequently the woman may have to change position to allow side views of the uterus and fallopian tubes.

WILL IT HURT?

You may experience slight cramps, similar to a mild period pain when the dye is injected for about 5-10 minutes.

You can reduce these symptoms by taking paracetamol or ibuprofen .

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE EXAMINATION?

Some ladies like to have someone accompany them to the hospital and then drive them home afterwards. You may experience a light period for one or two days after the examination. It may be advisable to bring a panty liner with you.

You can resume normal sexual activities straight away.

HOW WILL I GET THE RESULTS?

The results will be sent to your Fertility Specialist and you can discuss the results with him at your next appointment.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

An HSG is considered to be a very safe procedure. There are some recognized risks occurring less than 1% of the time:

Infection. This usually occurs when women have had previous tubal disease. You should contact the X Ray Department if you have increasing pain or fever 1-2 days after the procedure.

Fainting. Rarely the woman may feel light headed during or shortly after the procedure.

Radiation exposure. The level is very low, less than a bowel study. There have been no demonstrable problems if conception occurs later the same month. The HSG should not be done if pregnancy is suspected.

Iodine Allergy. Very rarely women have allergy to the iodine contrast. A non iodine compound is used. Let the doctor know if you are allergic to iodine, intravenous contrast dyes or seafood.

If you have any further questions about the examination please feel free to ask the nurse or radiographer when you come for your appointment. If there is any chance that you could be pregnant please telephone before your appointment.

Updated 1-11-16 JSP