

HYSTEROSALPINGOGRAM (HSG)

DESCRIPTION:

A hysterosalpingogram (HSG) is an x-ray procedure performed to evaluate your uterus and fallopian tubes. The procedure begins with a pelvic examination. Your doctor will place a catheter into your cervix. This catheter is used to instill a liquid into your uterus while a radiologist observes and documents the procedure using x-rays. If your fallopian tubes are open, the liquid travels through the tubes and spills freely into your abdominal cavity.

PURPOSE:

The hysterosalpingogram allows your doctor to study the shape of your uterine cavity. Abnormalities, such as polyps, fibroid tumors, scar tissue, or congenital defects may be identified. The test also studies the inside of your fallopian tubes and whether or not they are open. The test cannot determine anything about your ovaries, as they are not visible by x-ray.

TIMING:

A hysterosalpingogram is usually performed during the first half of your menstrual cycle. The optimum timing of the procedure is after your menstrual flow has stopped, but before you are due to ovulate. This assures that you are not pregnant, though it is fine to attempt conception during the month the test is performed. In fact, the pregnancy rates are slightly higher in the months just following the procedure.

LOCATION:

The hysterosalpingogram is performed at the office of Washington Radiology Associates (WRA). The WRA office is located on the 9th floor of the medical building at 2141 K Street, NW. You should plan to arrive fifteen minutes prior to your procedure in order to complete the appropriate registration forms. Please bring your insurance information with you on the day of the procedure.

PREPARATION:

Several days prior to the procedure, your doctor may want you to schedule an office visit to obtain bacterial cultures from your cervix. This assures that there is no active infection. One hour prior to the procedure, you should take an over-the-counter medication to reduce uterine cramping. Generally, 600mg of ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, Nuprin, etc.) is an adequate dosage. If you are allergic to ibuprofen or have problems with aspirin, you should let your doctor know in advance.

INSURANCE:

Some insurance companies require pre-authorization for the procedure. You should read your policy and/or call your insurance company in advance to determine if pre-authorization is necessary.

RISKS OF THE PROCEDURE:

The amount of radiation received during the procedure is minimal, and similar to that received during a chest x-ray. The liquid instilled into the uterus contains iodine. You must let your doctor know before the procedure if you are ALLERGIC TO IODINE OR SHELLFISH. There will likely be pain during the procedure. This pain is similar to what you may experience during your menstrual period and is greatly reduced by taking ibuprofen in advance. Rarely, an infection may follow the procedure. You should inform your doctor if your temperature exceeds 101^{oF} in the days following the procedure.