

About your hysterosalpingogram (HSG)



Information for patients
Radiology



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What is a hysterosalpingogram (HSG) and why do I need it?

An HSG is a special X-ray examination which looks at the inside of your womb (uterus) and fallopian tubes. It aims to show whether your uterus is normal and if your fallopian tubes are blocked or damaged. It may explain why you have not been able to get pregnant and it will help your doctor decide the most appropriate treatment for you.

The test is only effective if it is carried out at very specific times, and therefore it is important that you read the information in this leaflet carefully.

When can the test be performed?

Under the rules of radiation protection, we can only perform this test within 10 days of the start of your period. Day 1 is the first day that you have any spotting or bleeding.

If you come for your test and you are over 10 days, **we would not be able to perform the test** because of the radiation protection rules.

The best time to do the test is actually between day 5 and day 10 (from the start of your period). Performing it any earlier may give false images and we may need to repeat the test.

Should you be bleeding heavily the day before your appointment, please telephone the department for advice. Please call us on **0114 226 5731** and ask to speak to the Senior Radiographer.

If there is the slightest chance that you may be pregnant, we will not perform the examination, as the X-rays could put your pregnancy at risk.

Who will perform this test?

The test is performed by a friendly all **female** team.

It comprises of a Senior Radiographer or Advanced Practitioner, Radiographer and Clinical Imaging Assistants.

The sessions when we do the tests are:

Monday afternoon

Tuesday afternoon

Thursday morning

Friday afternoon

How do I make an appointment?

On the first day of your period please phone the X-ray department at the Royal Hallamshire Hospital on **0114 226 5731** and ask to speak to one of the Senior Radiographers.

Should you start your period over the weekend, please contact the department as soon as you can on Monday morning and we will try our best to give you an appointment within the 10 days as mentioned. This will be confirmed by letter.

What will happen when I arrive at the X-ray department?

Your letter will tell you where to come for your test. When you arrive please report to the Radiology Department reception (**X-ray C Floor**). You will then be asked to wait in the appointed waiting area.

One of our assistants will take you to a changing room when it is time for your test and you will be asked to change into a gown. You will then be shown into the X-ray room.

The Radiographer or Advanced Practitioner performing the test will ask you some general questions, and she will answer any questions you may have regarding the test.

What happens during the test?

The test actually takes about 5 to 10 minutes to do. You will be asked to lie down on the X-ray table in a similar position to that used in a smear test, with your legs supported in stirrups.

A speculum will be inserted into your vagina (like in a smear test) and will locate where your cervix is. A small catheter will be passed through the cervix into the neck of the womb and will be held in position with a small balloon.

A small amount of fluid will be run into your womb (about 10mls). The fluid will fill your womb and pass into your fallopian tubes. As this happens X-rays will be taken that will show the fluid within the womb and tubes.

Will it hurt?

The HSG can cause some 'period pain' as the fluid fills the uterus and fallopian tubes. This discomfort should settle as soon as the test is finished.

As the test can cause period pain for some women, we suggest that you take simple painkillers (the ones you may usually take for period pains, for example paracetamol or ibuprofen) 2 hours before your appointment.

What happens after the procedure?

Following the test there may be some slight spotting and the fluid will trickle out over the next 24 hours.

You will be given a sanitary pad (if you haven't brought your own), and shown to the rest room where you can get dressed.

Tampons must not be used, sanitary towels or panty liners only please.

The results will be sent to your consultant at Jessop's Hospital for your next appointment.

You should have no significant pain or bleeding following the test, but should this happen later, you will need to contact your GP.

What are the risks?

We, as a health care team, take every step to make sure the test is as safe as possible but there are possible complications:

Risks of radiation:

X-rays pose a risk in pregnancy during the early stages of development; we take all precautions to ensure you are not pregnant at the time of the test.

Although the amount of radiation you will receive is very small, (the equivalent of a chest X-ray) it is a negligible risk to you, as described by the Health Protection Agency.

Risks of infection:

There is a small risk of infection, especially if you have had previous womb infections, and because of this you may be given antibiotics by the clinic to take before the test.

If at the time of the test, the tubes appear to be blocked, we may prescribe antibiotics for you to take on the day.

In the unlikely event that you develop severe pelvic pain or bleeding, discharge (other than the fluid we put inside you), or a high temperature

after the test, we advise you to contact your GP, and tell them what test you have had. They may prescribe a course of antibiotics.

Risk of allergic reaction:

This is extremely rare, but it is possible that you may have an allergic reaction to the contrast fluid we use. If you have any allergies (especially if you have an allergy to iodine) it is important you let the person who is doing the test know.

Risk of fainting:

Occasionally some patients feel faint after the test. Should you feel faint we will ask you to wait in the room until you feel better.

Should I bring someone with me?

It is advisable to have someone with you in case you are in any discomfort following the procedure, or to drive you home.

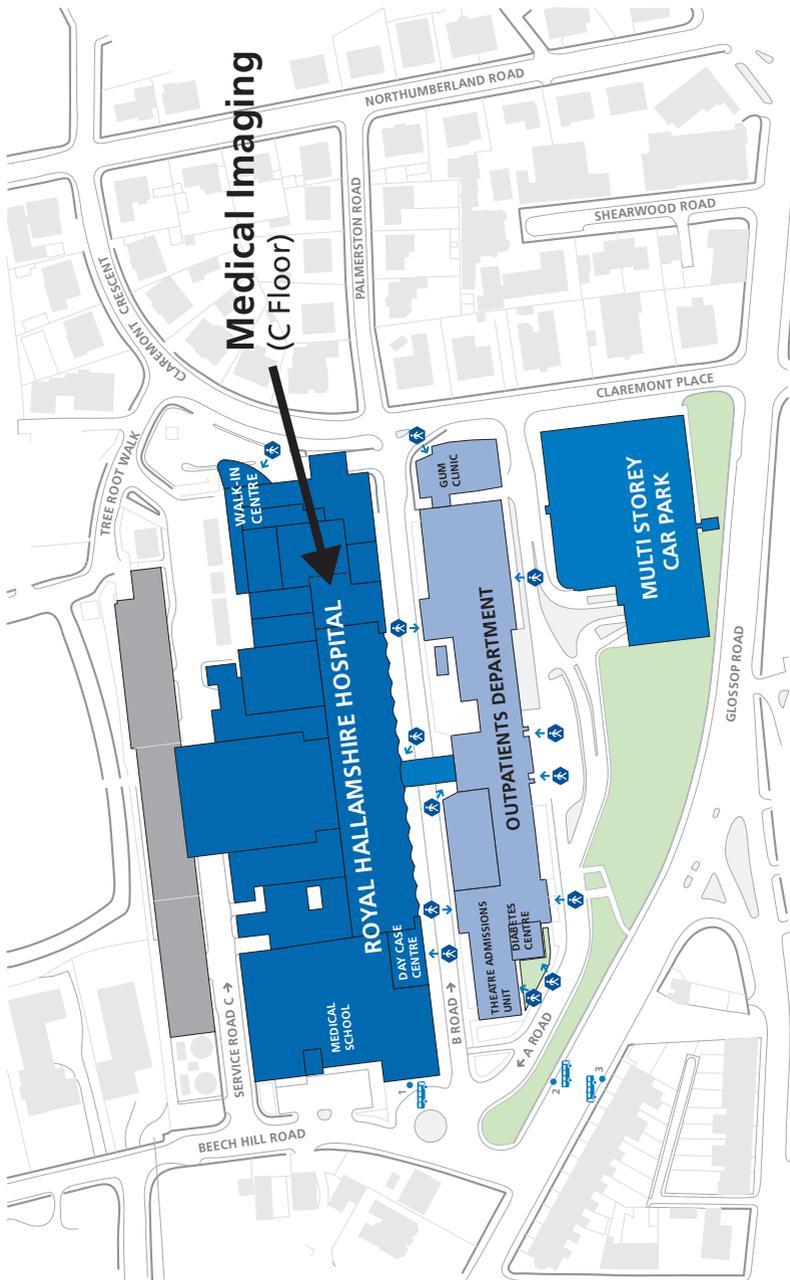
Most women feel absolutely fine after the test, and go back to work. The majority find the test is not half as bad as they expected and often express how much better the test was than what they had read or heard!

How long will it take?

The maximum time spent in the department is about 30 minutes which includes time to change into your gown, the test itself, and changing afterwards.

However, you may be here longer than 30 minutes if you have an ultrasound scan booked for the same session.

Royal Hallamshire Hospital



Is there anything I should look out for when I go home?

There should be no problems following the test, but as mentioned there may be some initial spotting, and sometimes mild discomfort which will ease in a few hours with paracetamol. Should this increase and you start to bleed heavily you need to:

- contact your GP and tell them what test you have had,
- or contact the Clinic at the Jessop Hospital on **0114 271 2866**

Should you have severe pain following the test, or pain that comes on later you need to go to the A&E department to be seen by a Doctor to make sure things are ok.

Please note: these problems are quite rare.

Can I start trying for a baby?

You can start trying for a baby as soon as you want to or as advised by your doctor.

Who should I contact for more information?

If you have any queries that are not answered by this leaflet, please contact the department on **0114 226 5731**



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