

Hysterosalpingo Contrast Sonography (HyCoSy)

Up to 30% cases of subfertility are due to fallopian tube disease. HyCoSy is a test which is done to check your fallopian tubes. During this test, we are also able to check the cavity of the uterus (womb). This leaflet explains what happens during the test, as well as its benefits, risks, preparation and alternatives. The test takes place in the Women's Health Outpatients department at Peterborough City Hospital or Lily Clinic at Hinchingbrooke Hospital.

What are the benefits of having a HyCoSy?

The test aims to show whether your fallopian tubes are 'open' by showing on an internal ultrasound scan if the fluid passes normally through the tubes. The test will also show up the inside of the womb and check for any abnormality of its lining.

What are the risks associated with a HyCoSy?

This is a routine and commonly performed outpatient procedure. The risks may include:

- Pelvic (tummy) infection- you will be tested for chlamydia infection prior to this procedure. If the chlamydia test results are not available on the day of the procedure, then you will be given antibiotics to take. Symptoms of a pelvic infection may include persistent foul smelling vaginal discharge, lower abdominal (tummy) pain, fever and/or feeling generally unwell. If you notice any of these symptoms, please do let us know as you will need further assessment.
- Tummy pain- period- like cramps: to minimise this risk, we recommend you take 1 gram of paracetamol and 400mg ibuprofen, provided you are not allergic to these medications, up to one hour prior to your appointment.
- Allergy to the dye.
- Inconclusive investigation- occasionally the picture is difficult to interpret (in one in 20 cases), and further investigations may become necessary.

Are there any alternatives?

1. Hysterosalpingogram (HSG): this test is conducted similar to the HyCoSy. This test looks at the tubes using x-rays instead of ultrasound. HyCoSy has the benefit of providing additional information about the structure of the womb (uterine) cavity which is not always possible with HSG.
2. Laparoscopy (key hole surgery) with dye test, under general anaesthesia. This is a small operation and reserved for patients with pelvic pain, or, as a further test when the x-ray or ultrasound test is unclear.

How do I need to prepare for a HyCoSy?

Please contact the Gynaecology Secretaries between 0830 hrs and 1730 hrs, on the first day of your menstrual cycle. If this falls on a weekend, please ring on the next working day (Monday to Friday). Ideally, we will try and perform this test in the first two weeks of your period cycle, after you will have finished menstruating/ bleeding. If it is not possible to book you the test that month, we will try to offer you a date during your next period cycle.

It is important to avoid any unprotected sexual intercourse (please abstain or use a condom) from the first day of your period until this test is done. This is important as if you are pregnant at the time of this test, there is a possibility of disturbing the implantation of the embryo. **The procedure will not be done if you have had unprotected sexual intercourse in that cycle prior to the procedure.**

Please inform the team if you have ever had an allergic reaction to any contrast agents/dyes.

You will have a slight vaginal bleed after the test and may need to use sanitary protection.

The investigation will take approximately half an hour. This does not include any waiting time prior to your appointment. It is advisable you bring a friend or relative with you to your appointment. They may also accompany you into the examination room, if you wish. Please observe Covid-19 rules prior to and during your appointment.

Consent – asking for your consent

We want to involve you in decisions about your care and treatment. If you decide to go ahead, you will be asked to sign a consent form. This states that you agree to have the treatment and you understand what it involves.

What happens during the HyCoSy test?

You will be asked to lie down as if you were having a smear test. A speculum is gently inserted into the vagina. Then a catheter (narrow plastic tube) is introduced through the cervix (neck of the womb). A tiny balloon (about 1 cm in diameter) on the end of the catheter is inflated to keep the catheter in position. After the speculum is removed, an internal ultrasound scan is then performed to watch as a small amount of water is passed through the catheter into the uterus. The water shows up the lining of the uterus. A contrast dye (special fluid that is seen clearly on ultrasound) is then passed through the catheter to show up the fallopian tubes. This fluid is easily processed and absorbed by the body after the procedure. The test takes 15 to 20 minutes.

What happens after the test?

The doctor performing the examination will give you the results immediately after the test. Any further tests or follow up arrangements that need to be arranged will be organised on the same day of the test. We advise you to remain in the department for 15 minutes after the scan, after which you will be safely able to leave the department.

What do I need to do after I go home?

You should be fine to carry out normal daily activities, and you should be able to start having sexual intercourse again.

Further information

Fertility Network UK are a UK infertility support network offering information and support to anyone affected by fertility problems www.fertilitynetworkuk.org

Contact Details:

Gynaecology Secretaries: Peterborough City Hospital 01733 673767 or 677153 Hinchbrook Hospital 01480 442867 Monday-Friday 0830 hrs and 1730 hrs
For pain or bleeding problems after HyCoSy: Emergency Gynaecology triage line: 01733 673758 (voicemail will cut in when the Monday-Friday 0800-1730 Weekend and Bank Holidays 0800-1200
For emergencies only, out of these hours, please attend the Emergency Department

Within this leaflet we use the term woman/women, however we acknowledge that it is not only people who identify as women for whom it is necessary to access our services. We recognise the importance of providing inclusive and respectful care to all people and their families, including those whose gender identity does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to make you feel more comfortable while you are under our care.