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Circle Healthcare

Information Leaflet (Version 1 2023)

Hysterosalpingo Contrast Sonography (HYCOSY)

A HyCoSy is a test using ultrasound and a special bubble fluid called ExEm foam to examine the uterus and fallopian tubes.

Why do we perform HYCOSY?

We use this test as an infertility investigation. If either the cavity of the uterus, or the tubes are damaged or blocked it can prevent conception taking place. It is not possible to see the tubes with normal x-rays or ultrasound, so a specialist examination such as this is needed.

What does the examination entail?

The examination is performed in the outpatient setting, usually in clinic. You will be asked to empty your bladder first and the procedure will be explained to you.

You will be asked to lie on the bed and a cover will be draped over your lower body. If you have not had a transvaginal scan to examine the pelvis before, this will be done first. This entails a thin ultrasound probe being introduced into the vagina. This is a routine gynaecological examination and should not hurt. This allows us to visualise the uterus and ovaries prior to the HyCoSy. Providing this examination is satisfactory, it will then progress on to the HyCoSy.

The HyCoSy.

A speculum will be put into the vagina to visualise the entrance to the womb (cervix). A small catheter will then be passed into the uterus. A tiny balloon which is attached to the catheter will be inflated to keep the catheter in place during the examination.

The speculum is then removed, and a small amount of fluid is injected into the cavity under ultrasound control. The fluid shows up as a “bright white” on ultrasound and we can trace its course outlining the cavity of the womb and tubes if there is no blockage.

What are the risks and side effects?

You may feel some mild period pain like discomfort during the procedure. If you do experience pain that you are unable to tolerate, it is important to let the person doing the examination know right away. Occasionally this mild discomfort will continue after the procedure for a short while, but it usually settles with simple pain killers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen.

There is a very small risk of infection. For this reason, you will be given a prescription for an antibiotic to take immediately after the procedure.

The solution used to check the patency of the tubes contains hydroxyethyl cellulose, please let us know if you are allergic to this.

You must use barrier methods of contraception during the cycle of the HyCoSy appointment until your next period.

How long does the test take?

The procedure takes about half an hour.

What happens after the examination?

We recommend that you bring a sanitary pad to wear as you may have some discharge following the procedure.

You may not feel able to return to work immediately after the examination. If possible, you should be accompanied by a partner or friend on your homeward journey, and you should not drive for an hour or so afterwards.

Most women feel completely well after the procedure and can return to their normal activities shortly after. The examination will be reported by Mr Dobson and the findings discussed in full with you on the day.

Booking your appointment

The test can be performed between day 2 and day 14 of your menstrual cycle. It cannot be performed if you are currently being treated for a pelvic infection or if there is a chance that you are pregnant. We ask that you use a barrier contraceptive (e.g. condoms) or abstain from intercourse from the start of your period to the start of the following period after your HyCoSy examination.

If you have any further questions or are waiting for the HyCoSy procedure, please phone Mandy Banbury (secretary to Mr Dobson) on day 1/ 2 of your period to book in your HyCoSy appointment.

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