

# Hystero-contrast sonography (HyCoSy)

**This leaflet aims to answer your questions about having hystero-contrast sonography. It explains the benefits, risks and alternatives, as well as what you can expect when you come to hospital. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.**

## What is hystero contrast sonography?

Hystero contrast sonography (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 Assisted Conception Unit (ACU) at Guy's Hospital, Tower Wing, 11<sup>th</sup> floor. If you have any questions or concerns, please ask any member of the ACU team.

## What are the benefits of having a HyCoSy?

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

## Are there any risks associated with a HyCoSy?

There is a small risk of a pelvic (tummy) infection from this test. You will be tested for chlamydia infection prior to the procedure. If the chlamydia test results are not available on the day of the procedure, then you will be given antibiotics to take.

The following symptoms are very rare, but do let us know if you develop any of the following:

- Persistent foul smelling vaginal discharge
- Lower abdominal pain
- Fever
- Generally feeling unwell.

You will need further assessment and treatment for infection if you have the above symptoms.

Pelvic pain, like a mild period cramp, may occur during the test. We suggest you take painkiller (ibuprofen or paracetamol) an hour before the test, to reduce the amount of cramps that you may get.

Occasionally the picture is difficult to interpret (in one in 20 cases), and further tests may be needed.

## Are there any alternatives?

There is another test called a hysterosalpingogram (HSG), which looks at the tubes using x-rays instead of ultrasound. The fallopian tubes can also be assessed by a laparoscopy, which is a small operation and involves a general anaesthetic. This test is reserved for patients with severe pelvic pain, or, as a further test when the x-ray or ultrasound test is unclear.

## What do I need to do to prepare for a HyCoSy?

On the first day of your period, telephone 020 7188 0502 between 9am and 3pm to book your test. Please ring on the next working day (Monday to Friday) if this falls on a weekend. The test will usually be done two to three weeks after the period starts but if there is a shortage of appointments, you may be asked to ring back with the next period.

It is important that you are not pregnant at the time of the procedure, as there is possibility of disturbing the implantation of the embryo. Once you have an appointment date, do not have **unprotected sexual intercourse (abstain or use condoms)** from the first day of your menstrual cycle until after the test. **The procedure will not be done if you have had unprotected sexual intercourse in that cycle prior to the procedure.**

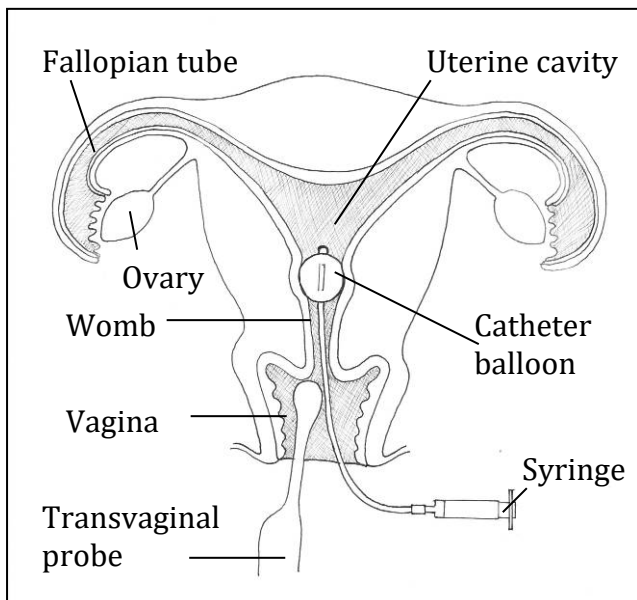
You may have a slight vaginal bleed after the test, and you may need to wear a panty-liner or sanitary towel.

## 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.

If you would like more information about our consent process, please speak to a member of staff caring for you.

## 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 1cm) on the end of the catheter is inflated to keep the catheter in position. 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 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?

At the end of the test we can usually let you know our findings. Any further tests or follow-up arrangements that need to be done will be organised on the same day as the test.

If indicated, you will be given a prescription for antibiotics. You will only be able to use this prescription at Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital pharmacies.

## What do I need to do after I go home?

You can go home immediately after the test. You should be fine to carry out normal daily activities, and you will be able to start having sexual intercourse again.

## Will I have a follow-up appointment?

As mentioned already, we can often give you results of the test on the day as well as information on any further tests or treatment that may be required. This means that in most cases a follow-up appointment will not be needed. If an appointment is required, this will be arranged for you before you leave the department.

## Further information

**Fertility Network UK** are a UK infertility support network offering information and support to anyone affected by fertility problems [www.fertilitynetworkuk.org](http://www.fertilitynetworkuk.org)

### Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about the HyCoSy procedure, please contact Guy's Assisted Conception Unit, **t:** 020 7188 2300 Option 4, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

11th Floor, Tower Wing, Guy's Hospital, Great Maze Pond, London, SE1 9RT  
**t:** 020 7188 2300 **fax:** 020 7188 0490 **w:** [www.ivfdirect.com](http://www.ivfdirect.com)

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets)

### Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

**t:** 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

### Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

**t:** 020 7188 8801 (PALS) **e:** [pals@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@gstt.nhs.uk)

**t:** 020 7188 3514 (complaints) **e:** [complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk)

### Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch.

**t:** 020 7188 8815 **e:** [languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk)

### NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

**w:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

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