

### **What is a hysteroscopy?**

A hysteroscopy is a test using a small fibre optic camera which allows your gynaecology doctor to look inside the womb directly at the womb's lining.

### **Why have I been referred to the clinic?**

There are a number of reasons for a hysteroscopy test

#### 1. Abnormal bleeding.

Bleeding after the menopause, heavy periods and bleeding in between periods can all be signs that there is a problem with the lining of the womb. A serious problem is uncommon but the gold standard test to check the womb is a hysteroscopy test.

#### 2. Fertility problems

Your fertility specialist may have referred you to investigate the shape of the womb

#### 3. Following miscarriage or childbirth when there may be some placental tissue left inside the womb

#### 4. To remove a coil with lost threads

### **What should I do before my appointment?**

#### 1. Avoid unprotected sex

If you are not menopausal, it is important that you have not had unprotected sexual intercourse between your period starting and the date of the test. This is to ensure we do not interfere with a potential developing pregnancy.

#### 2. Take simple painkillers

We recommend you take paracetamol or ibuprofen around 30 minutes before your appointment time.

#### 3. Defer the appointment if bleeding is very heavy

If your bleeding is very heavy it may be difficult to complete the test and it may be best to defer. *However, if you are having continuous heavy bleeding with very few bleed free days-PLEASE ATTEND. In these cases it is important we take a biopsy of your womb even if we can't see inside the womb clearly*

### **What will happen at the clinic?**

When you arrive, a doctor will ask questions to confirm the reason you are attending and take your consent to proceed.

You will be asked to change into a gown and will have the test in a treatment room. The hysteroscope uses water and is placed at the entrance to your vagina which is filled with water. The water helps to visualise the cervix (neck of the womb) and helps to open up the neck of the womb to allow the camera to pass inside the womb itself. You will be able to watch on the television screen. As the camera passes through the cervix, you will experience cramps like period pain. This is mild for some and more severe for others. If you need a biopsy, a speculum will be passed into the vagina and a small plastic straw passed into the womb to extract a sample with a simple suction mechanism. Again this is crampy like a period pain. The test takes between 5 and 10 minutes, but the camera is only inside the womb for a very short time. If you need further treatment such as removal of tissue, polyps or coils, your doctor will explain this in more detail on the day.

**Are there any possible complications?**

As with any procedure, there are rare complications. In around 1 to 2 in 1000 women, the hysteroscope may accidentally damage the womb by penetrating through the muscle layer. This is called a perforation. This complication is much more common in women who are put to sleep to have a hysteroscopy. Having the procedure awake is safest. Even more rarely an infection may develop in the womb.

**What happens afterwards and how will I feel?**

You may expect to have light bleeding for a few days and the cramping may also last a day or so. Some women feel lightheaded after the procedure and need some time to recover or lie down. Most women drive themselves to and from the appointment.

**Will I get results?**

If a biopsy is taken, you may be informed of the result at your next appointment or you may receive a letter with the result. You will be given information at the time of the appointment with what to expect.

**Who should I speak to about the appointment?**

The hysteroscopy secretary is available on 02837562124 if you need to change or cancel your appointment.



# Outpatient hysteroscopy information for you