



# Hysterosonogram

*How to prepare for your exam*

**Pelvic ultrasound exams are used to detect problems with the pelvic organs. A hysterosonogram is done to detect causes of abnormal bleeding. Read this handout to learn how to prepare for the exam, how the exam works, how the exam is performed, what you will feel during the exam, and how to get your results.**

## **What is pelvic ultrasound imaging with hysterosonography?**

Ultrasound is used to obtain pictures of organs by sending sound waves into the body. The sound waves are captured and displayed as a picture on a screen. X-rays are not involved in ultrasound exams. Pelvic ultrasound is used to view and check the female pelvic organs: the uterus, ovaries, fallopian tubes, and nearby structures.

A hysterosonogram is a vaginal pelvic ultrasound that is done to look for causes of abnormal vaginal bleeding. The exam can be done either before or after menopause.

## **How does the exam work?**

Ultrasound involves sending sound waves into the body using a transducer, a hand-held device that sends and receives sound waves. After gel is applied to the skin, the sonographer presses the transducer against the skin to take pictures, which appear on the screen. As the sound waves echo from the body's fluids and tissues, a picture is created showing the pelvic organs and tissues under study.

The hysterosonogram is a vaginal ultrasound in which the radiologist sends saline (salt water) into the uterine cavity.

## **How should I prepare for a hysterosonogram?**

- Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothes.
- For most exams, you will need to drink a quart of water ahead of time so that your bladder is full for the study. A full bladder helps the sonographer (technologist) to see the uterus, ovaries, and bladder.
- If you have had a pelvic ultrasound done recently at UWMC, then no bladder filling is needed. If you have not had a pelvic ultrasound done, you will need a full bladder.

## Questions?

Call 206-598-6200

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC Clinic staff are also available to help at any time.

Imaging Services:  
206-598-6200

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## How is the exam performed?

1. You will be asked to remove your clothing from the waist down, and you will be given a sheet to cover yourself.
2. You will lie on an exam table, and your legs will be placed in stirrups.
3. The radiologist then cleans the vaginal area with a special soap.
4. A speculum (exam tool) is placed in the vagina. A small catheter (tube) is then placed into the vagina and through the cervix.
5. The sonographer then places the ultrasound probe and takes pictures of the uterus.
6. The radiologist then sends a small amount of saline into the uterine cavity through the catheter. The saline outlines the area to look for polyps, fibroids, or other problems.

## What will I feel during the procedure?

- If a pelvic ultrasound is done prior to the hysterosonogram, you will feel some discomfort due to the pressure of the transducer over your full bladder. Transvaginal ultrasound will be done to view the pelvic structures more clearly by placing a small transducer in the vagina. For a vaginal ultrasound exam, you will need to empty your bladder. A vaginal ultrasound is usually more comfortable than a manual pelvic exam.
- You may feel some pressure from the slow infusion of saline into the uterine cavity.
- The exam lasts about 30 minutes once the saline is infused.

## Who interprets the results and how do I get them?

The radiologist who specializes in ultrasound will review the pictures and send the report to your referring doctor. You will get the ultrasound results from the doctor who ordered the test. In some cases, the radiologist may discuss early findings with you when your exam is over.

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