



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF
OBSTETRICIANS AND
GYNECOLOGISTS

Hysteroscopy

Hysteroscopy is a way to look inside the uterus. A hysteroscope is a thin, telescope-like device that is inserted into the uterus through the vagina and cervix. It may help a doctor diagnose or treat a uterine problem.

Uses of Hysteroscopy

Hysteroscopy is minor surgery that may be done in a doctor's office or operating room with local, regional or general anesthesia. In some cases, little or no anesthesia is needed.

Diagnostic Hysteroscopy

Hysteroscopy can be used to diagnose some problems in the uterus. It also can be used to confirm the results of other tests, such as hysterosalpingography (HSG).

Abnormal Uterine Bleeding. A woman has this condition if she has heavier or longer periods than usual, bleeds between periods, or has any bleeding after her periods have stopped at menopause.

Infertility. A couple may not be able to achieve pregnancy for a number of reasons. Sometimes the cause of female infertility is related to a defect in the shape or size of the uterus.

Repeated Miscarriages. Some women, although able to get pregnant, lose the fetus to miscarriage — the loss of a pregnancy before 20 weeks. Hysteroscopy can be used with other tests to help find the causes of repeated miscarriage.

Adhesions. Bands of scar tissue, or adhesions, may form inside the uterus. This is called Asherman syndrome. These adhesions may cause infertility and changes in menstrual flow.

Abnormal Growths. Sometimes benign growths, such as polyps and fibroids, can be diagnosed with the hysteroscope.

Displaced IUDs. An intrauterine device (IUD) is a small plastic device inserted in the uterus to prevent pregnancy. In some cases, it moves out of its proper position inside the uterus.

Operative Hysteroscopy

When hysteroscopy is used to diagnose certain conditions, it may be used to correct them as well.

What to Expect

Hysteroscopy is a safe procedure. Problems such as injury to the cervix or the uterus, infection, heavy bleeding or side effects of the anesthesia occur in less than 1 percent of cases.

Before Surgery Hysteroscopy is best done during the first week or so after a menstrual period.

Anesthesia Hysteroscopy may be performed with local, regional or general anesthesia. The type used depends on a number of factors.

The Procedure Before a hysteroscopy, the opening of your cervix may need to be dilated (made wider) with a special device. The hysteroscope then is inserted through the vagina and cervix and into the uterus.

A liquid or gas may be released through the hysteroscope to expand the uterus so that the inside can be seen

better.

Recovery

If local anesthesia was used, you will be able to go home in a short time. If regional or general anesthesia was used, you may need to be watched for some time before you go home.

Get in touch with your doctor if you have:

- A fever
- Severe abdominal pain
- Heavy vaginal bleeding or discharge

Finally ...

Because hysteroscopy allows your doctor to see the inside of the uterus, it may permit a diagnosis of some medical problems. It also may be used to treat them. The procedure and recovery time are brief in most cases.

This excerpt from ACOG's Patient Education Pamphlet is provided for your information. It is not medical advice and should not be relied upon as a substitute for visiting your doctor. If you need medical care, have any questions, or wish to receive the full text of this Patient Education Pamphlet, please contact your obstetrician-gynecologist.

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