SALINE INFUSION SONOHYSTEROGRAPHY (SIS)

Your doctor or nurse practitioner wants you to have a saline infusion sonohysterography. Also known as S-I-S ultrasound, sonohysterography consists of taking a sonographic imaging of the uterus and cervix while injecting sterile saline fluid into the uterine cavity. Typically SIS is used to evaluate abnormalities of the endometrium (the lining of the uterus) in women with abnormal vaginal bleeding, in women whose endometrium appears abnormal on pelvic ultrasound or for evaluation of infertility.

Ultrasound is like regular sound, except it has a higher pitch than human beings can hear. When sent into your body through a transducer, the sounds if reflected off internal structures. The returning sounds (echoes) are received by the transducer and converted by a specialized computer into an image of the internal structures that can be viewed on a monitor similar to a television screen.

SIS Ultrasound

The procedure takes about 30 minutes. To prepare, you will be asked to empty your bladder and disrobe from the waist down. You will need to assume a position similar to the one used for a Pap test, with your legs in stirrups. Let the sonographer know if you have any latex allergies or gynecological infections or if there is any possibility you may be pregnant.

A registered sonographer first will perform a vaginal ultrasound. You will insert a wand-shaped transducer into your vagina. The tip of the transducer may be circular or oblong but is usually smaller than the standard speculum used during your Pap test. First a protective cover is placed over the transducer, and the sonographer lubricates it so that it's easier to insert.

The sonographer then removes the transducer, and your doctor or nurse practitioner will insert a speculum into the vagina to help see the cervix. The doctor or nurse practitioner then inserts a small catheter into the cervix and injects the saline, while performing another vaginal ultrasound. Some women experience cramps, similar to menstrual cramps, during the saline infusion. This usually stops once the infusion stops and the catheter is removed.

Following the procedure, you may experience some vaginal spotting. You may also have cramps, for which you can take acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin). Contact your doctor if you have abnormal bleeding, pain or fever. In an infection occurs, it is usually minor and can be treated easily if reported right away.

AIUM-accredited and ARDMS-registered mean added reassurance

Virginia Women's Center is accredited by the American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine (AIUM). Accreditation is not just a one-time assessment. Ultrasound practices accredited by the AIUM must go through the same exhaustive audit every 3 years, to retain their accreditation. Accredited practices are shown to have well-qualified personnel, high standards for the performance of each ultrasound procedure, appropriate ultrasound facilities and equipment, adequate record-keeping and quality assurance guidelines.

Virginia Women's Center sonographers are registered with the American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonographers (ARDMS). This means they have consistently demonstrated professional standards, as well as achieved a level of competency in both technical procedures and patient care. ARDMS-certified sonographers must maintain their credentials by fulfilling continuing competency education requirements that serve to enhance their knowledge and keep their skills up-to-date. This ongoing education is critical because the field of ultrasound (sonography) is advancing so rapidly.