

Tubal patency test using ExEm foam (HyFoSy) under ultrasound guidance

Fallopian tubes transport the eggs from the ovary into the womb for implantation. Disorders of the tubes can account for 1:4 causes of subfertility or inability to get pregnant naturally. Looking at the tubes using a special gel foam, is one of the first steps in the work-up for subfertility. It is a relatively new test, which is less painful, and does not involve radiation unlike the more traditional HSG (hysterosalpingogram). It can be done at the same time as the scan to check the womb and ovaries.

How is it performed?

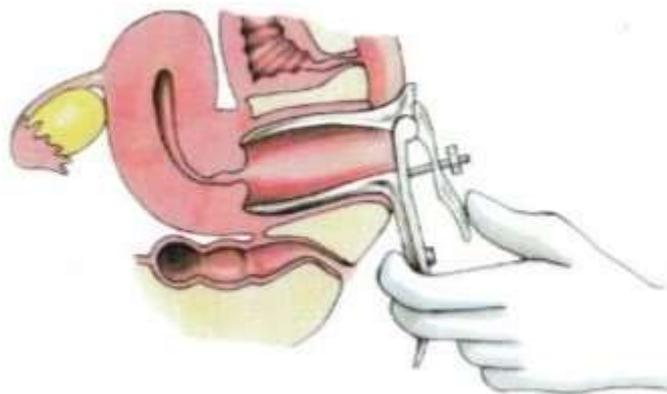
A plastic speculum is inserted into the front passage (vagina). The neck of the womb is cleaned with an antiseptic solution. A fine flexible tube (catheter) is inserted into the opening of the cervix (os). The speculum is removed, and the probe for performing an internal scan is introduced into the vagina to visualise, womb. The gel foam is then passed through the catheter whilst performing the scan (see pictures below).

The gel foam is made up of hydroxyethylcellulose, glycerol and purified water and no harmful effects have been reported so far. The procedure is performed in the first 10 days of the menstrual cycle (usually a few days after the period stops). It is best to avoid sex until the test or use condoms.

The test itself takes about 10 minutes, and is fairly painless. At most, you may experience a bit of discomfort during the procedure with the introduction of the catheter into the neck of the womb and the gel foam passing through the womb into the tubes. Paracetamol (two 500mg tablets) or ibuprofen (400mg) taken 1 hour before the procedure should be sufficient.

The results will be available on the same day. If you have any further questions about the procedure please do not hesitate to ask me.

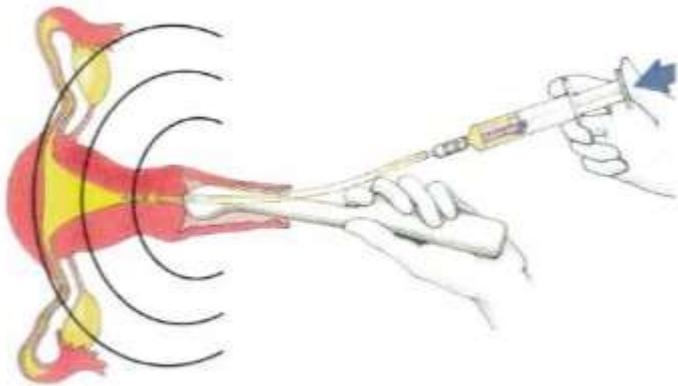
Insertion of the speculum to view cervix



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Removal of the speculum after inserting catheter into cervix (neck of womb) with syringe containing gel foam attached



ExEm foam being instilled into womb and tubes whilst scanning to check tubal patency.