

Fibroid Treatment Options

UNDERSTANDING YOUR SURGICAL AND NON-SURGICAL OPTIONS

Many women live with fibroids without knowing it. For women who do have symptoms there are various levels of treatment available at the Fibroid Clinic at University of Minnesota Medical Center. Several factors may affect your course of treatment including the severity of your symptoms; the size, number and location of your fibroids; and your desire to preserve your fertility.

What are my treatment options?

Medical management with drug therapy

Hormone medications reduce bleeding and decrease fibroid tumor size.

Advantages:

- No procedure necessary
- Preserves the uterus

Disadvantages:

- Can cause menopause-like symptoms and bone loss
- Symptoms can return

GnRH (gonadotropin-releasing hormone) therapy

GnRH therapy is a medication therapy that reduces the production of estrogens and causes the shrinkage of the fibroid.

Advantages:

- Size reduction may allow its removal by surgery
- Decreased bleeding

Disadvantages:

- Can provoke 'menopause-like' symptoms
- Size of tumor increases when the medication is stopped



To schedule an appointment, please call the Fibroid Clinic at 612-UMWOMEN (612-869-6636).

Fibroid Clinic

In the Women's Health Center
University of Minnesota Medical Center
Phillips-Wangensteen Building
First Floor, Clinic 1C
516 Delaware Street S.E.
Minneapolis, MN 55455

Referrals: 612-672-7000 or 1-888-318-DOCS(3627)

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Total or subtotal hysterectomy

Total or subtotal hysterectomy is the removal of the uterus and possibly ovaries.

Advantages:

- Total suppression of the symptoms

Disadvantages:

- Risks associated with surgery and general anesthesia
- Loss of fertility
- Two to six week recovery

Endometrial ablation

Endometrial ablation is the removal of the uterus lining to reduce bleeding.

Advantages:

- Can effectively control bleeding
- No incisions
- Five years after the procedure, 85-95% of the women have no or a light menstrual flow)

Disadvantages:

- Risk of uterine perforation
- Not applicable to all fibroids
- Abnormal uterine bleeding may occur

Myomectomy

Myomectomy is a surgical removal of the uterine fibroids.

Advantages:

- Allows those women who wish to become pregnant to keep their uterus
- Currently the only procedure recommended for fertility

Disadvantages:

- Can be a long recovery period
- Risks associated with surgery, general anesthesia, and blood transfusions
- Formation of adhesions
- Fibroids may recur, requiring additional procedures
- Myomectomy may not be recommended depending on the location, size and number of fibroids

Uterine Fibroid Embolization (UFE)

UFE is a non-surgical procedure to block blood flow to fibroids, causing them to shrink.

Advantages:

- Improvement of bleeding and abdominal symptoms in 80% to 90% of the cases
- Few major complications
- All the fibroids are treated at one time
- One week recovery

Disadvantages:

- Pain post-embolization controlled generally well by medications
- Possible vaginal discharge, cessation of menstrual period, or infection

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