

# Patient Guide

Understanding Fibroids & Knowing Your Options



## About Fibroids

Understand what fibroids are and their importance

## Treatment Options

Learn more about minimally-invasive and surgical treatment options

## USA Fibroid Centers

How we can partner alongside you on your fibroid journey

# *Navigating Fibroids Without Surgery*

## ***Patient Guide: Understanding Fibroids & Knowing Your Options***

— This resource was created to help you navigate your fibroid journey with confidence and clarity. Here, you'll find everything you need to know about fibroids—what they are, how to recognize the symptoms, and the full spectrum of treatment options available, including advanced non-surgical solutions.

Whether you're seeking answers, assessing your risk, or exploring treatment options, this guide offers valuable insights to assist you every step of the way. **Let's start your journey to improved health and peace of mind.**

Share this with someone you love 

# About This Guide

## *Why it is important to understand fibroids and know your options?*

Around **600,000 hysterectomies** are performed every year in the United States. **About 60%** of those are for the treatment of uterine fibroids.<sup>1</sup>

Surgery does not need to happen to women in the vast majority of fibroids cases. You have **non-invasive, non-surgical treatment** options if you experience fibroid symptoms.

**Knowledge is power.** By knowing the signs, symptoms, and treatment options, you can make **informed** decisions about your care. Early detection can prevent complications, while informed choices can help manage symptoms, preserve fertility, and avoid unnecessary treatments. This knowledge **empowers** you to take control of your health and well-being.

**USA Fibroid Centers** is a national network of exceptional fibroid clinics specializing in the **leading FDA approved, non-surgical, office-based procedure** to treat symptomatic fibroids with **no hospital visit: Uterine Fibroid Embolization (UFE)**.

UFE treatments at USA Fibroid Centers are **covered by most insurance plans** and Medicaid.

1. <https://www.aafp.org/pubs/afp/issues/2000/0615/p3601.html>







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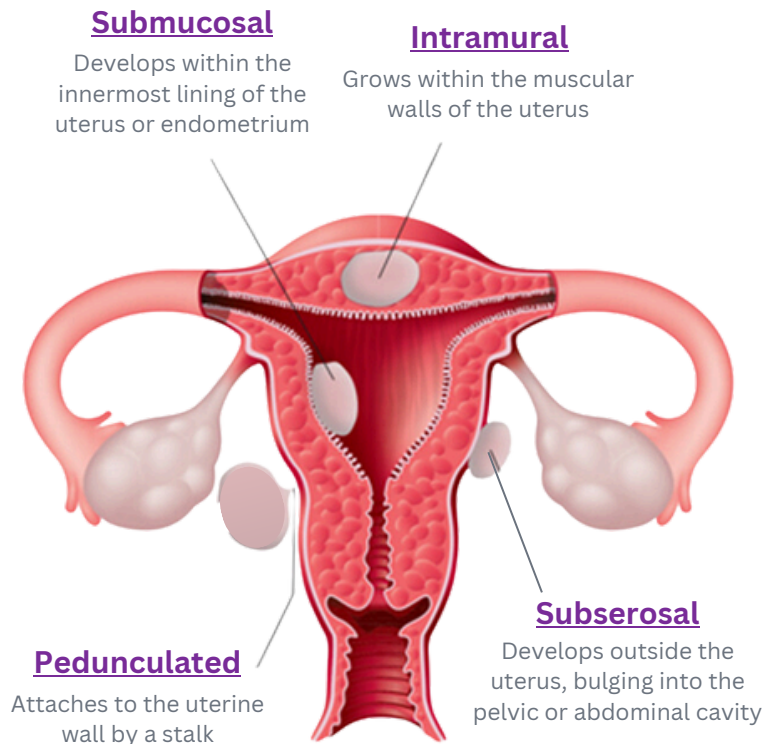
# About Fibroids

## What are Uterine Fibroids?

Fibroids, also known as uterine myomas or leiomyomas, are benign. This means they are noncancerous.

However, they can **harm** nearby organs and cause anemia because of heavy menstrual bleeding. Hormones, genetics and several other factors can cause fibroids to form.

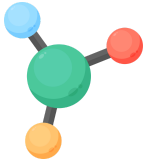
### Types of Fibroids



### Fibroid Sizes



# Risk Factors



## INSULIN-LIKE GROWTH FACTOR

An important growth hormone called insulin-like growth factor (**IGF**) is found naturally in your body. IGF is known to **stimulate the growth** of many types of cells and is also believed to contribute to fibroid growth.



## EXTRACELLULAR MATRIX

ECM is a substance that causes cells to stick together and gives fibroids their **fibrous consistency**. It is also involved with storing growth factors and causing changes within cells.



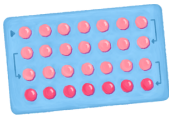
## HIGH ESTROGEN

Uterine fibroids are considered to be **estrogen-dependent**, and **higher levels** of this hormone cause fibroids to grow.



## VITAMIN D DEFICIENCY

Vitamin D deficiency has been linked to uterine fibroid growth. Studies suggest that lower serum vitamin D levels are associated with a **higher risk of developing fibroid tumors**.



## BIRTH CONTROL PILLS

Because oral contraceptives contain synthetic versions of **estrogen** and progesterone, it's possible they **stimulate fibroid growth**.



## OVERWEIGHT

Weight gain may be a contributing factor to uterine fibroids because excess body fat can influence **estrogen levels**. The increase in estrogen can then cause fibroid growth.



## FAMILY

Genetics is one possible cause of fibroids. One study shows that a strong family history — having a mother or sister with fibroids — **increases the risk** of developing uterine fibroids by **20% for African-American women** and **30% for white women**.

# Common Symptoms

Uterine fibroid symptoms can range from uncomfortable and mild to severe. The symptoms a woman experiences depend on the **size** and the **type** of fibroids.



[Heavy Bleeding](#)



[Bleeding between Periods](#)



[Anemia](#)



[Bloating/Protruding Belly](#)



[Chronic Abdominal Pain](#)



[Frequent Urination](#)



[Painful Sexual Intercourse](#)



[Constipation](#)

Fibroids can often go **unnoticed**, especially if they are small or don't cause any symptoms. It's important to be aware that even without experiencing anything, you may still have fibroids. As they grow larger, symptoms can become more noticeable and lead to various health issues.

Use this [symptom checker](#) to identify common signs of uterine fibroids.



[Take our Fibroid Symptom Checker!](#)



# You are *not* alone.

Estimates say between **20% and 50%** of women of reproductive age have fibroids. However, many go **undiagnosed**.<sup>2</sup>

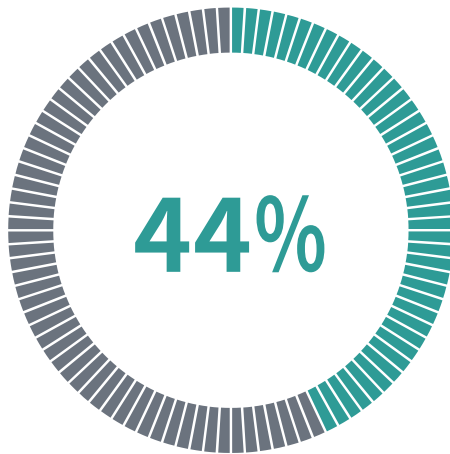
Studies show that up to **30% to 77%** of women will develop fibroids sometimes during their childbearing years. But only about **one-third** of those women can be **accurately diagnosed** during a physical exam.<sup>3</sup>



2. <https://www.aafp.org/pubs/afp/issues/2000/0615/p3601.html>

3. <https://www.uclahealth.org/departments/obgyn>

# Uterine Fibroid Embolization (UFE) Minimally Invasive Treatment

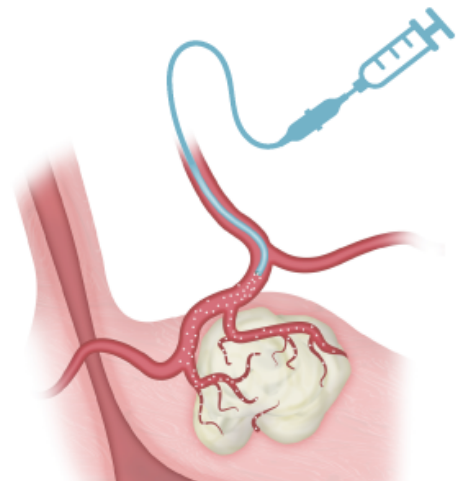


**44%** of women diagnosed with uterine fibroids say they were **unaware** of a less invasive option. <sup>4</sup>

That is where **USA Fibroid Centers'** interventional radiologists come in. Our medical staff performs Uterine Fibroid Embolization (UFE), which is an advanced, **non-surgical treatment** that shrinks fibroids **without removing one's uterus** via surgery.

UFE can **control** your symptoms and **improve** your **quality of life** without the painful procedure and long recovery related to hysterectomies.

UFE is a **non-surgical** procedure performed in our **outpatient** suites. You'll receive light sedation for comfort. Guided by ultrasound and X-ray, a tiny catheter is inserted into the artery supplying blood to your fibroids. A therapeutic agent is delivered to reduce blood flow, causing the fibroids to shrink over time. The entire procedure takes about **30-45 minutes**, with **minimal recovery** time. Stiches are **not** required.



4. Society of Interventional Radiology, & Harris Poll. (2017, June 23 & 27) . The Fibroid Fix: What Women Need to Know. Retrieved October 9, 2018, from [https://www.sirweb.org/patients/fibroid\\_fix2/fibroid-fix-report/](https://www.sirweb.org/patients/fibroid_fix2/fibroid-fix-report/)

# Other Treatment Options

A variety of fibroid treatments are available, but women with fibroids often are not informed of all their options. As a result, the majority believe that hysterectomy is their only choice.



## Hysterectomy

*Hysterectomy is the surgical removal of the uterus and cervix. Supracervical hysterectomy refers to removal of the uterus while the cervix is spared. These procedures may also involve removal of the ovaries, fallopian tubes, and other surrounding structures.*



## Myomectomy

*Myomectomy, also known as fibroidectomy, is a surgical procedure that removes fibroids while preserving the uterus. Unlike a hysterectomy, which removes the entire uterus, a myomectomy allows a woman to retain her fertility and reproductive potential. However, it still may impact hormonal balance and menstrual cycle.*



## Ablation

*Two small incisions in the abdomen and uses a radiofrequency needle to target and destroy fibroid tissue with heat. The surrounding healthy tissue is not affected.*



## Acessa™ Procedure

*Acessa™ is a minimally invasive procedure to treat symptomatic uterine fibroids. The Acessa™ procedure is done under general anesthesia, and involves laparoscopic radio-frequency ablation (RFA) using heat energy to target and shrink fibroids.*



# Comparing Your Options

There are a lot of options out there, but what is **best** for you?

| Procedure                | UFE              | Hysterectomy  | Myomectomy      | Acessa™ Procedure | Ablation        |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Anesthesia Required      | Local            | General       | General         | General           | General         |
| Hospital Stay            | None             | 2-3 Days      | 1-3 Days        | None              | None            |
| Recovery Time            | 2-7 Days         | 2-6 Weeks     | 2-6 Weeks       | 1-2 Weeks         | 1-2 Weeks       |
| Retains Uterine Function | Yes <sup>5</sup> | No            | Yes             | Yes               | Yes             |
| Retains Fertility        | Yes              | No            | Yes             | Yes               | Yes             |
| Sex Life                 | After 1 -2 weeks | After 6 weeks | After 4-6 weeks | After 1-2 weeks   | After 2-4 weeks |

UFE continues to be the **leading choice**, when compared to invasive surgeries like a hysterectomy or myomectomy that involve a 6 -8 weeks recovery time. With UFE, most women begin normal activities in **3-4 days**, with **full recovery** after **1-2 weeks**.

5. João M. Pisco, Marisa Duarte, Tiago Bilhim, Jorge Branco, Fernando Cirurgião, Marcela Forjaz, Lúcia Fernandes, José Pereira, Nuno Costa, Joana B. M. Pisco, António G. Oliveira. Spontaneous Pregnancy with a Live Birth after Conventional and Partial Uterine Fibroid Embolization. Radiology, 2017; 161495 DOI: 10.1148/radiol.2017161495



# Is UFE Effective?

Between **87% and 97%** of UFE patients report **satisfaction** and **improved quality of life**.<sup>6</sup>

UFE, which is **covered** by most insurance plans and Medicaid, is perhaps best known for its **fast recovery period** offering effective symptom relief. With no hospital stay, you can go home on the day of your procedure. After another **2-7 days**, you should be able to return to your **normal**, daily activities.

Personalized treatment matters, because no two people experience the same symptoms or challenges. As healthcare providers, our main goal is to ensure **all our patients** have accurate, reliable information to make the **best** treatment decision for themselves.

## *Life without Fibroids*

- **Lighter** and **shorter** menstrual periods
- **No** pelvic pain and pressure
- **More** energy
- **Improved** sex life
- **Reduced** frequent urination
- **No** constipation and bloating

6. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4520371/>



# *Read what patients **like** **you** have to say about us.*

“No words can describe the level of **service** and **care** from the staff at USA Fibroid Centers at the St. Nicholas clinic.”

- **Mandy**

"Dr. Gunzenhauser performed my UFE procedure in May, which was **quick** and **painless**. Within four months, my heavy bleeding, bloating, and anemia **disappeared**. I wholeheartedly recommend USA Fibroids Centers to anyone struggling with uterine fibroids."

- **Libby**

[Read More!](#)







# Additional Resources

Our goal is to **empower** you with the necessary resources to help you make informed decisions for your health and well-being. Explore the links below to learn more!



## FIRST VISIT GUIDE

*Advice on what to expect and how to prepare for a consultation with us.*



## BLOG CENTER

*Your go-to guide for all things fibroids. Discover expert tips, real stories, and must-know info.*



## FAQS

*Get the answers to frequently asked questions about Fibroids and uterine fibroid embolization (UFE).*



## INSURANCE COVERAGE

*Want to know if your insurance covers UFE? Don't have insurance? Learn more how we can help you!*



## PREGNANCY, FIBROIDS, AND UFE

*Can you get pregnant with fibroids? Does UFE affect fertility? Learn more here.*



## FOLLOW OUR EVENTS

*Join us live online, in person, or watch past events on demand—each event is designed to educate, support, and empower your fibroid journey.*



If you are currently experiencing symptoms described in this guide, do not delay getting diagnosed or treated.

Our fibroid experts at USA Fibroid Centers are here to provide an accurate diagnosis and treatment options designed just for you.



Schedule a consultation at

**(855) 615-2555**

**[USAFibroidCenters.com](https://USAFibroidCenters.com)**

