

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Fibroids:

**Q: What are fibroids?**

**A:** Uterine fibroids are growths in the womb (uterus). They are made of muscle and other tissue. Fibroids almost never develop into cancer.

**Q: Who is at risk for fibroids?**

**A:** African-American women have a greater risk than white women. Also, women who are overweight have greater risk than those who are not.

**Q: What are the symptoms?**

**A:** Many women don't feel any symptoms and may not even know that they have fibroids. Fibroids can cause these symptoms:

- Heavy bleeding or painful periods
- Bleeding between periods
- Feeling "full" in the lower part of your belly
- Need to use the bathroom often
- Pain during sex
- Lower back pain
- Not being able to have a baby (infertility), losing a baby (miscarriages), and early labor during pregnancy

**Q: Where do fibroids grow?**

**A:** Fibroids can be found in different areas of the womb.

**Q: How can fibroids be treated?**

**A:** The range of possible treatments include:

- Pain medicines
- Shrinking fibroids without surgery:
  - By decreasing the blood flow to them (uterine artery embolization).
  - By removing the fibroids without taking out the womb (myomectomy).
- Surgery to take out the womb (hysterectomy). Talk to your doctor about the kinds of hysterectomies that are available. A woman would not want this form of treatment if she wants to have children.

**Q: What if I still want to have a child?**

**A:** In some cases, fibroids can prevent a woman from getting pregnant. Doctors have ways to treat fibroids and to help a woman get pregnant.

**Q: Do fibroids cause cancer?**

**A:** Fibroids almost never develop into a muscle type of cancer. Having fibroids does not increase your risk for getting other kinds of cancer in the womb.

**Q: Do they ever go away?**

**A:** Fibroids usually stop growing or shrink after menopause.