



Common treatment options for uterine fibroids

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	Hysterectomy†	Myomectomy‡	Uterine artery embolisation (UAE)	MRI guided focused ultrasound myolysis
What is it?	Fibroids removed together with the uterus (womb) *	Fibroids are removed but not the uterus	Blood supply to uterus blocked resulting in fibroid shrinkage	Fibroids are heated up leading to shrinkage
Which fibroids are <u>not</u> suitable?	(All fibroids suitable)	(All fibroids suitable)	Fibroids on stalks Submucous fibroids Very large fibroids	Fibroids on stalks Fibroids near vital structures (e.g. bowel, bladder) or nerves Very large fibroids
What are the major advantages?	Only treatment which is guarantees a cure No more periods/period pain No chance of recurrence	Fibroids are removed Best option if you wish to conceive	Non-surgical treatment No need for general anaesthesia	Non-surgical treatment No need for general anaesthesia
What are the major disadvantages?	Involves major surgery Requires general anaesthesia Cannot get pregnant	Involves major surgery Usually requires general anaesthesia Pelvic adhesions likely after abdominal or laparoscopic surgery New fibroids can develop	Post-procedure pain Infection Premature menopause 1:4 women undergo hysterectomy within 2 years	Relatively long procedure time Modest reduction in fibroid size Skin burns Injury to adjacent structures High chance of treatment failure (up to 28%)
How long does it take?	1-2 hours	1-3 hours	1 hour	2-4 hours
How long will I be in hospital?	4-6 days (abdominal) to 2-3 days (vaginal or laparoscopic)	4-6 days (abdominal) to day case (hysteroscopic)	1-2 days	Outpatient
When am I likely to be able to resume normal activities?	4-6 weeks (abdominal) to 3-4 weeks (vaginal or laparoscopic)	4-6 weeks (abdominal) to few days (hysteroscopic)	Few days	Few days
What will happen to my fibroids?	Fibroids (and uterus) are removed	Fibroids are removed	Fibroids usually shrink by 50-70%	Fibroids usually shrink by 15-25%
What will happen to my periods?	Periods will stop	Periods usually become lighter and less painful	Periods usually become lighter and less painful	Periods usually become lighter and less painful
Can I become pregnant afterwards?	No	Yes	Pregnancy is not recommended at present	Pregnancy is not recommended at present

† Includes abdominal hysterectomy, vaginal hysterectomy and laparoscopic hysterectomy

‡ Includes open (abdominal) myomectomy, laparoscopic myomectomy, hysteroscopic myomectomy and vaginal myomectomy

* Hysterectomy means removal of the uterus but not ovaries and therefore does not result in the menopause

Table based on: Levy BS. Modern management of uterine fibroids. Acta Obstet Gynecol Scand 2008; 87(8): 812-23.

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