



## DOCTOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

# Managing Uterine Fibroids

Uterine fibroids are benign, non-cancerous tumors that grow in or around the uterus. Asking the right questions during your conversation with a healthcare professional will help you know what to expect and how to better navigate your uterine fibroids. Familiarize yourself with these common terms before your appointment to help facilitate your discussion.

## Vocabulary to Know

Your doctor might mention these common terms. Here's what they mean.

<b>Benign</b>	When referring to a tumor, benign means it is not harmful. More specifically, benign uterine fibroids are non-cancerous.
<b>Embolization</b>	Embolization is a minimally invasive procedure that blocks one or more blood vessels to prevent blood flow. Tissue dies when the blood supply is cut off. In uterine artery embolization (UFE), small particles of polyvinyl alcohol are injected into the uterine arteries via a catheter blocking blood flow to the fibroids, causing them to shrink and sometimes die. The procedure is performed by a medical specialist called an interventional radiologist.
<b>Estrogen</b>	Estrogen is the major sex hormone in women, although men have it too. Estrogen plays many roles in fertility, sex-related functions, mood, bone strength, and even heart health. Estrogen levels are one of many factors that play a role in the growth and development of uterine fibroids.
<b>Hysterectomy</b>	A hysterectomy is the surgical removal of the uterus and the only curative treatment for fibroids. A woman loses her ability to have children after a hysterectomy.
<b>Leiomyoma</b>	This is the medical term for uterine fibroids and refers to the abnormal proliferation of smooth muscle tissue in the uterus.
<b>Menopause</b>	Menopause is the time in a woman's life when her periods stop and she is unable to have kids. Menopause is diagnosed 12 months after the last period, usually in women between the age of 40 and 50.
<b>Menorrhagia</b>	Menorrhagia is the medical term for heavy or prolonged menstrual bleeding.
<b>Nulliparity</b>	Nulliparity is the medical term for a woman who has never had a child or carried a pregnancy. Nulliparity is a risk factor for uterine fibroids.
<b>Myomectomy</b>	A myomectomy is a uterus-sparing operation to remove fibroids. This is often a preferred choice for women of child-bearing age, who want to control bleeding and preserve fertility. Myomectomies can be performed via a large or several small incisions. The outpatient surgical procedure is often a temporary fix as the fibroids are capable of growing back.
<b>Uterine fibroid tumors</b>	Fibroids are noncancerous tumors that grow in and around the uterus. They can be as small as a seed or as large as a grapefruit. Symptoms depend on size and location. Uterine fibroids may also be referred to as myoma, leiomyoma, leiomyomata, and fibromyoma.

