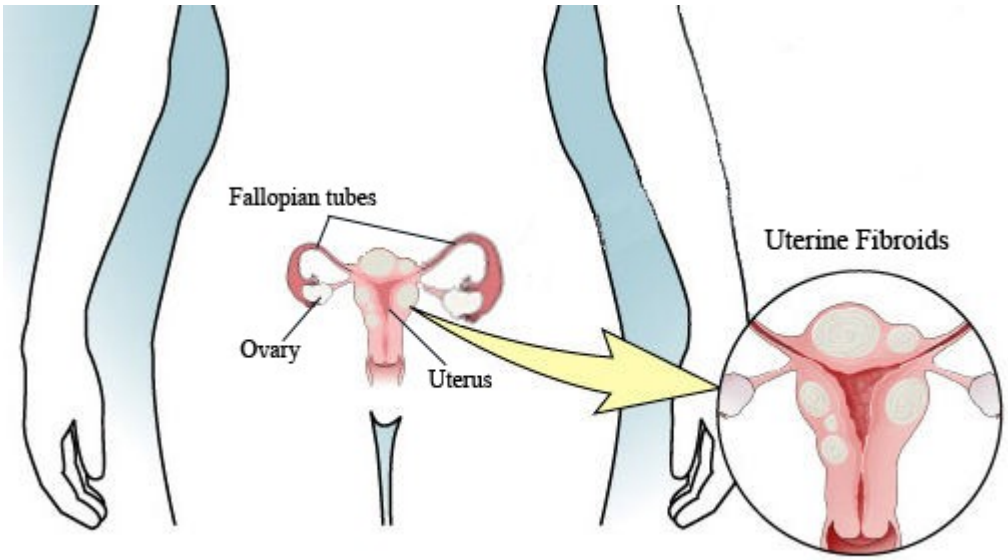
Fibroids (Leiomyoma's)

You have been diagnosed as having a *fibroid*. Fibroids are smooth muscle lumps (*tumors*) which can occur any place in a woman's body. They are usually in the womb (*uterus*). The most common problem (*symptom*) of fibroids is bleeding. Over time this may cause low red blood cells (*anemia*). Other symptoms include feelings of pressure and pain in the pelvis. The *diagnosis* (learning what is wrong) of fibroids is made by physical exam. Sometimes tests such as an ultrasound are used. This is helpful when fibroids are felt around the ovaries and to look for tumors.



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TREATMENT

- Most fibroids do not need surgical or medical treatment. Sometimes a tissue sample (*biopsy*) of the lining of the uterus is done to rule out cancer. If there is no cancer and only a small amount of bleeding, the problem can be watched.
- Hormonal treatment can improve the problem.
- When surgery is needed, it can consist of removing the fibroid. Vaginal birth may not be possible after the removal of fibroids. This depends on where they are and the extent of surgery. When pregnancy occurs with fibroids it is usually normal.
- Your caregiver can help decide which treatments are best for you.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Do not use aspirin as this may increase bleeding problems.
- If your periods (*menses*) are heavy, record the number of pads or tampons used per month. Bring this information to your caregiver. This can help them determine the best treatment for you.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION IF:

- You have pelvic pain or cramps not controlled with medications, or experience a sudden increase in pain.
- You have an increase of pelvic bleeding between and during menses.
- You feel lightheaded or have fainting spells.
- You develop worsening belly (*abdominal*) pain.

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