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A JOURNEY TO
WOMB WEALTH AND WELLNESS
Celebration of Fibroid Awareness

WHAT ARE FIBROIDS?

Uterine fibroids, also known as leiomyomas, are firm, compact tumors that are made up of smooth muscle cells and fibrous connective tissue, ranging from as small as a seed to as large as a melon. You can have either one or multiple fibroids, and while many experience debilitating symptoms, some do not experience symptoms at all.¹

Uterine fibroids affect over 70% of Black women globally,² and they tend to develop fibroids at a younger age, starting in their 20s.³ The most common symptoms of uterine fibroids include⁴:

- Heavy menstrual bleeding or painful periods.
- Longer or more frequent periods.
- Pelvic pressure or pain.
- Frequent urination or trouble urinating.
- Growing stomach area.
- Constipation.
- Pain in the stomach area or lower back, or pain during sex.
- Anemia and its resulting symptoms, like fatigue, shortness of breath, and dizziness.



Fibroids can occur in all women. Sadly, generational trauma, stress, medical discrimination, and other physical and environmental factors, like obesity and vitamin deficiencies make all Black women, from their early 20's through menopause, disproportionately face uterine fibroids and other womb challenges. Black women are also impacted by endometriosis, polycystic ovary syndrome, fertility challenges, maternal mortality, among other medical issues.

EARLY DETECTION IS KEY

Only about one-third of fibroids are large enough to be detected by a health care provider during a physical exam, so they are often undiagnosed.⁵ If you are having fibroids, you are not alone. Having a fibroid is not a death sentence.

Get screened and get informed. There's no one solution, so collaborate with your healthcare providers to chart that for yourself.

- Ask your provider to screen you for fibroids beyond the touch test.
- Request an abdominal and transvaginal ultrasound.
- Listen to your body.
- Speak out - advocacy is the first step to taking care of your womb health.

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TIPS TO IMPROVE WOMB WELLNESS⁶



Maintain hormonal balance. Experts suggest that lifestyle factors such as stress, sleep, and environmental toxins can influence hormone levels. You can manage stress through relaxation techniques like meditation, deep breathing, and massage.



Focus on your emotional health and spirit. Practice self-care activities, such as journaling, walking, spending time with friends and family who are supportive and encouraging.



Fuel your body with good nutrition. The foods you eat provide essential nutrients that support uterine health and function. Regularly incorporate nutrient-rich foods, including fruits and vegetables that provide vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants; fiber-rich grains (i.e. millet, beans, oatmeal, quinoa); and healthy fats (i.e. omega-3 fatty acids in fish, such as salmon, mackerel, tuna, and sardines) - all of which help reduce inflammation and support hormonal balance.



Get moving. Regular exercise is important to keeping your womb healthy. Engaging in physical activity promotes blood circulation to the uterus, supporting its health and function.

1. <https://www.fibroidfighters.org/uterine-fibroids/>

2. <https://rsphealth.org/uterine-fibroids/>

3. <https://www.usafibroidcenters.com/blog/are-african-american-women-more-likely-to-get-fibroids/#:~:text=Prevalence%3A,to%2070%25%20of%20white%20women>

4. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/uterine-fibroids/symptoms-causes/syc-20354288>

5. <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/uterine-fibroids>

6. Adapted from the health site written by Dr Manisha Tomar, Senior Consultant, Obstetrician and Gynecologist, Motherhood Hospital.

<https://www.thehealthsite.com/pregnancy/womb-wellness-gynecologist-shares-7-essential-tips-to-take-care-of-your-reproductive-health-1091048/>

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