

By Daniel E. Long, MD

Don't suffer from uterine fibroids

Nonsurgical treatment can help

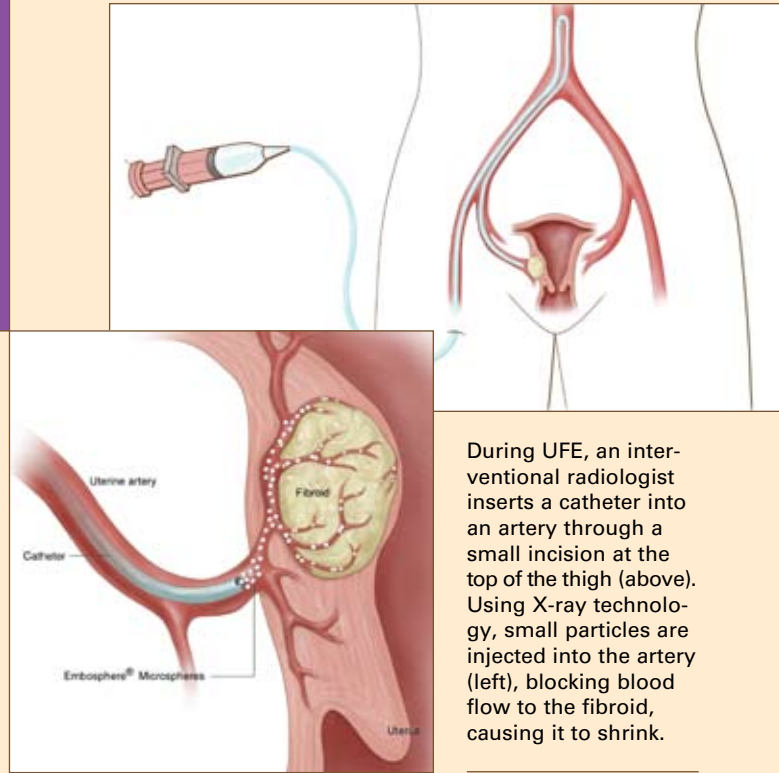
Uterine fibroids affect 20 percent to 40 percent of women ages 35 and older. These noncancerous growths develop in the muscular uterus wall, and while they usually don't have symptoms, they can cause heavy bleeding, prolonged monthly periods and extreme pain—symptoms that can have a significant impact on a woman's life.

Shrinking fibroids

Uterine fibroid embolization (UFE) is a non-surgical alternative to myomectomy (surgical fibroid removal) and hysterectomy (surgical uterus removal) to treat fibroids. During UFE, the patient is sedated and an interventional radiologist—a board-certified physician who specializes in minimally invasive, targeted treatments—inserts a catheter into an artery through a small incision at the top of the thigh. Using X-ray technology, small particles are injected into the artery, which block the flow of blood to the fibroid, causing it to shrink. Fibroids typically shrink by about 40 percent to 60 percent over the next three to six menstrual cycles and may continue to shrink for up to a year.

The entire UFE procedure usually takes less than an hour. Some women can go home the same day; others remain in the hospital overnight for observation and to be treated for any discomfort. Many women resume light activities in a few days, and the majority are able to return to normal activities within seven to 14 days.

Of women treated at The Christ Hospital for



fibroids, about 90 percent who had excessive bleeding and 85 percent who had pelvic pressure, bloating and urinary frequency have had a significant decrease in persistent symptoms.

Is UFE for you?

UFE patients enjoy shorter hospital stays, faster recovery periods and fewer complications than hysterectomy patients. Because it uses a minimally invasive technique, UFE can safely treat women with other health problems. Your gynecologist and interventional radiologist can help you decide if UFE is right for you. Ideal candidates include women past childbearing age who have troublesome symptoms and want to avoid hysterectomy. **WHT**

Fight fibroids!

Board-certified diagnostic radiologists Joseph Bernstein, MD; Daniel Long, MD; and James Traiforos, MD, are here to help. To learn more about UFE or to schedule an appointment with one of our physicians, call The Christ Hospital at **513-585-1000**.

Illustration provided by Biosphere Medical, Inc.



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