



INNOVATIVE THERAPY FOR UTERINE FIBROIDS

"Most people don't know what interventional radiology is," says Dr. Jeffrey H. Miller of Harris, Birkhill, Wang, Songe and Associates, P.C., affiliated with Oakwood Healthcare System. "When I tell someone what I do they usually say, okay, now in English."

Interventional radiology is a subspecialty of radiology in which physicians use imaging guidance (x-ray, ultrasound, CT) to perform minimally invasive procedures using catheters, wires, and a variety of other devices.

Uterine fibroid embolization (UFE) is a procedure that has helped many women avoid unnecessary hysterectomies. Embolization procedures have been used successfully for more than 20 years to treat heavy bleeding after childbirth as well as other life-threatening conditions. About 10 years ago, doctors discovered that when UFE was used pre-operatively to decrease blood loss during myomectomy (surgical removal of fibroids), many patients no longer needed surgery after UFE.

UFE shrinks fibroid tumors by delivering clotting agents (plastic particles, gelfoam, etc.) to the fibroid to block its blood supply. It is minimally invasive and cost effective, helps avoid myomectomy and irreversible hysterectomy, and has about an 85 to 90 percent success rate, with a shorter recovery time than surgery.

Are you a candidate for UFE?

One-third of the 600,000 hysterectomies performed annually in the United States are for benign (non-cancerous) fibroid tumors of the muscular wall of the uterus, which can be as tiny as a quarter of an inch, or larger than a cantaloupe, causing the uterus to grow to the size of a five-month pregnancy. Among women over 35, 20 to 40 percent have uterine fibroids of significant size, and the risk goes up to 50 percent for African-American women.

Genetic predisposition as well as hormone levels are linked to fibroids. Fibroids can grow larger during pregnancy and shrink afterward. Decreased estrogen levels after menopause may lead to improvement, although women who take supplemental estrogen may not experience relief. While most women don't experience symptoms, they may manifest as:

- Heavy, prolonged menstrual periods and clotting, which can lead to anemia
- Pelvic pain or pressure
- Pain in the back or legs
- Pain during sexual intercourse
- Bladder pressure
- Pressure on the bowel, leading to constipation and bloating
- Abnormally enlarged abdomen



In the Detroit area, call Dr. Jeffrey H. Miller, M.D. a board certified interventional radiologist, if you are experiencing any of the symptoms of fibroid tumors. Dr. Miller is fellowship trained with ten years experience in his field. He also has a certificate of added classification of vascular and interventional radiology. He is affiliated with Oakwood Hospital & Medical Center in Dearborn, Michigan, and can be reached at 313-593-7292.

Jeffrey H. Miller, M.D.
Department of Radiology
313-593-7292
18101 Oakwood Blvd
Dearborn, MI 48201