



VASCULAR &
INTERVENTIONAL
SPECIALISTS

A DIVISION OF CHARLOTTE RADIOLOGY

***Schedule your appointment with the
Vascular & Interventional Specialists
of Charlotte Radiology.***

Our Interventional Radiologists are experts in vascular care, able to treat uterine fibroids and a variety of other conditions using minimally invasive techniques.

To schedule a consultation with one of our Interventional Radiologists, please call **704.FIBROID (704.342.7643)** or visit **704fibroid.com**.

Visit CharlotteRadiology.com for more information on procedures, technology, our subspecialized physicians and more.



**UTERINE FIBROID
EMBOLIZATION**

The softer side of surgery.

What is Uterine Fibroid Embolization (UFE)?

Uterine Fibroid Embolization (UFE) is a minimally invasive procedure used to treat fibroids, the most common noncancerous uterine tumor. Fibroids can be very small or large, and they can cause significant discomfort: pelvic pain, heavy menstrual bleeding, cramping and pressure on pelvic organs.

There are several types of uterine fibroids:

- ▶ **SUBSEROSAL FIBROIDS**, which develop near the outside of the uterus and expand outward, typically do not affect menstrual flow but can become uncomfortable due to size and pressure.
- ▶ **INTRAMURAL FIBROIDS**, which develop within the uterine wall and expand, can cause the uterus to feel larger than normal. These are the most common fibroids and can result in heavier menstrual flows and pelvic pain or pressure.
- ▶ **SUBMUCOSAL FIBROIDS**, which develop deep within the uterus just under the lining of the uterine cavity, often cause very heavy, prolonged periods.
- ▶ **PEDUNCULATED FIBROIDS**, which extend from the uterus on a stalk, can cause bleeding, pain or pressure depending on their location.

What are the symptoms?

- Heavy, prolonged and painful menstrual periods
- Pelvic pain, pressure or heaviness
- Back or leg pain and/or cramping
- Pain during sexual intercourse
- Bladder pressure
- Constipation
- Frequent urination
- Abnormally enlarged abdomen

Who is likely to have uterine fibroids?

Uterine fibroids are very common, found in 25 – 40% of all women; however, African American women are at a higher risk, with fibroids present in up to 50% of women ages 35 – 45.

How are fibroids diagnosed and treated?

Fibroids can sometimes be diagnosed during a gynecological visit. Fortunately, major surgery is no longer the main treatment option. UFE is minimally invasive and can provide significant and lasting symptomatic relief. A physician uses a small catheter to release tiny particles into the uterine arteries to effectively block the blood supply to the fibroids, causing them to shrink.

Determining whether a patient is an appropriate candidate for UFE requires careful consideration of all treatment options, as well as a consultation and MRI. Most insurance companies cover this treatment, but it's important to confirm this before the procedure.

What can patients expect?

The procedure takes an hour or two. Patients are made comfortable with IV sedation. After the procedure, patients typically spend one night in the hospital and resume light activities over the next few days. Most patients resume their normal routine in one to two weeks. A MRI scan is scheduled six months post-procedure to confirm success.

How successful is UFE?

UFE is a successful minimally invasive treatment for thousands of women, with at least 90% reporting significant or total relief from fibroids. UFE is effective at treating multiple fibroids while preserving the uterus.

