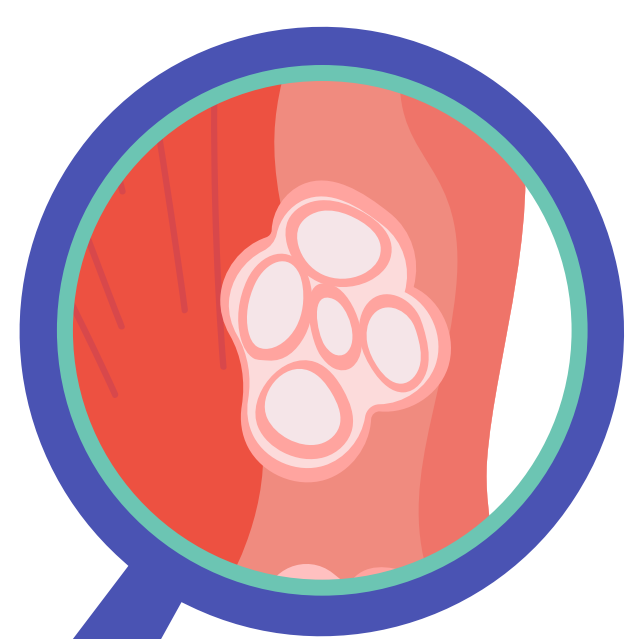


What You Need to Know About Uterine Fibroids

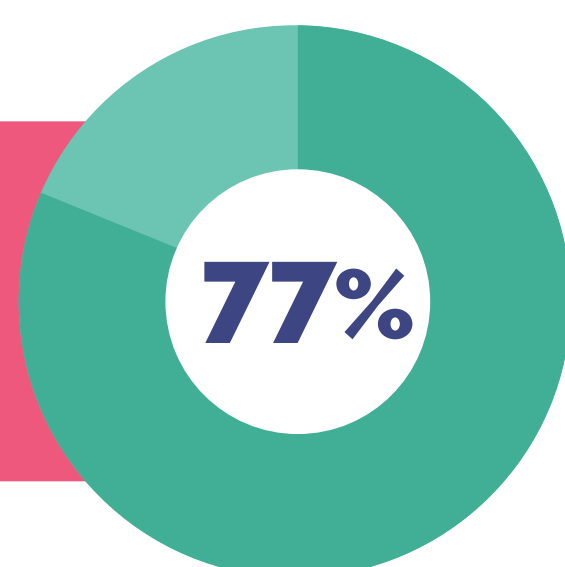
Get the facts about this common condition



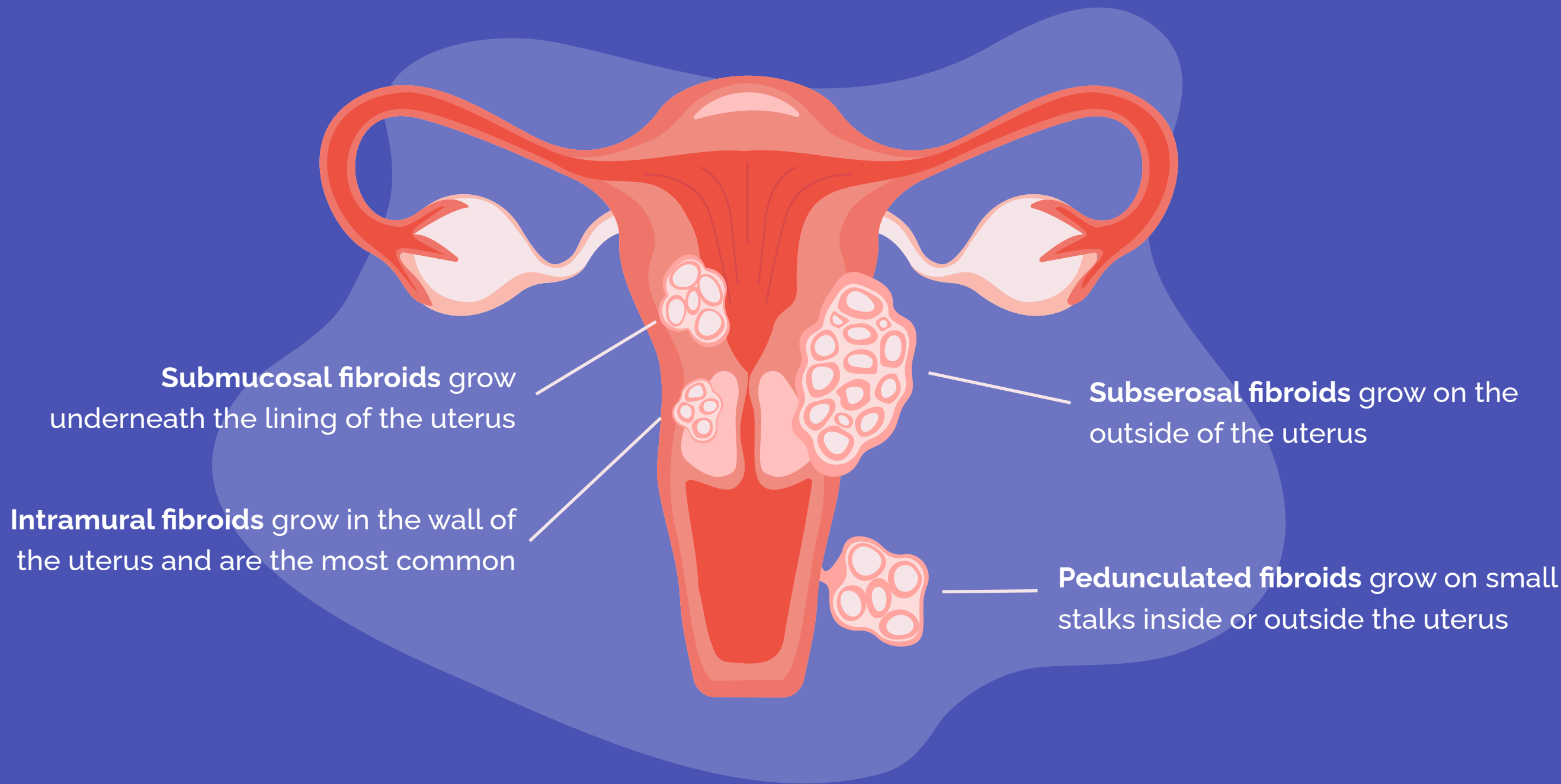
What are fibroids?

- Fibroids are muscular tumors that grow in the wall of the uterus.
- They are almost always benign (not cancerous) growths. Very rarely, a fibroid may contain cancer cells.
- They can grow as a single tumor, or there can be many of them in the uterus.
- They can be as small as an apple seed or as big as a honeydew melon.

An estimated 20% to 50% of women of reproductive age currently have fibroids, and up to 77% of women will develop fibroids sometime during their childbearing years.



Types of fibroids



Fibroid symptoms

Symptoms can range from none to severe, and they can include:

- Heavy periods
- Periods that last more than a week
- Pain, pressure or a feeling of fullness in the pelvis (lower stomach area)
- Frequent urination
- Pain during sex
- Constipation
- Lower back pain

Risk factors for fibroids include:

- Age**
A woman's risk of developing fibroids increases in her 30s through **menopause**. After menopause, fibroids tend to shrink.
- Family history**
Your chance of developing fibroids is 3x higher than average if your mother has/had them.
- Obesity**
The risk of developing fibroids for women with **obesity** is 2-3x times higher than average.
- Ethnicity**
Black women are more likely than white women to develop fibroids.

Many women with fibroids have no symptoms.




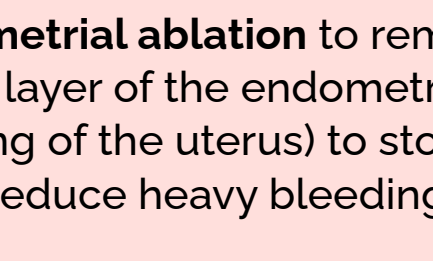




Fibroids and family planning

Many women with fibroids have no problem conceiving naturally, but sometimes there can be a link between fibroids and **infertility**.
During pregnancy, fibroids can increase risk of **complications** like miscarriage and preterm birth.

Treating fibroids

Women who have small fibroids or no symptoms may not need treatment. For those that do, **options** include:



- Surgery** including myomectomy (removal of fibroids) or hysterectomy (removal of uterus)
- Endometrial ablation** to remove a thin layer of the endometrium (lining of the uterus) to stop or reduce heavy bleeding
- Medical treatment to reduce bleeding** gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH) antagonists with hormonal therapy; hormonal contraceptives, including IUDs; or tranexamic acid
- Medical treatment to reduce bleeding and fibroid size** GnRH agonists with or without hormonal therapy
- Embolization** a procedure that blocks blood flow to fibroids and causes them to shrink