

Uterine Fibroids and Menopause

As a woman matures, her ovaries produce less of the hormone estrogen and her menstrual cycle begins to change and eventually stops, resulting in **menopause**. During the menopause transition (**perimenopause**) women can experience symptoms of hot flashes, changes in sexual desire, and irregular periods that, for some, can last up to 10 years. Menopause is the point in time 12 months after a woman's last menstrual cycle, typically in her late 40s or 50s.



Surgical procedures that remove or damage your ovaries (e.g., oophorectomy or total hysterectomy) can also result in the onset of menopause, regardless of age.

30% of newly diagnosed fibroids occur during **perimenopause** years

Symptomatic fibroid growth can peak during perimenopause years. Medical therapies can be prescribed to assist with symptoms, particularly heavy menstrual bleeding.

After menopause, the overall drop in estrogen and progesterone typically results in reduced growth of existing and new fibroids, providing some relief from fibroid symptoms. However, the body still produces small amounts of estrogen, and some women might continue to have symptoms after menopause.

Managing Fibroid Symptoms Post-menopause

Because periods have stopped after menopause, intense menstrual cycles associated with fibroids no longer occur. **If you experience bleeding after menopause, you should immediately consult with your health care provider.** If other symptoms, such as cramps, swollen abdomen, frequent urination, or lower back pain, continue to persist and affect your daily activities, discuss them with your provider as well.

Hormone replacement therapy is commonly used to treat menopausal symptoms by supplementing the estrogen that the body has stopped making. However, this may reintroduce risk of fibroid growth. Your provider may have to adjust your dosage to determine the best balance between your menopause and fibroid symptom relief.

In certain cases, surgical removal of fibroids may be recommended post-menopause.

Just like patients in any other life stage, the most important aspect to treating postmenopausal symptoms of uterine fibroids is tracking symptoms and talking to a health care provider about any changes or pain experienced.

