While uterine fibroids do not cause serious pregnancy problems, fibroids may interfere with implantation and pregnancy, depending on where they are located in the uterus. But before deciding to address your fibroids surgically, it's best to explore natural options first, like the tips to shrink fibroids naturally in this article.

What are Fibroids?

Fibroids are benign growths in the uterus, usually in the muscle wall. They can be asymptomatic (one is not aware that there is one or more) or they can cause heavy bleeding and pain. Fibroids are also known as uterine leiomyomas, myomas or benign tumors. While fibroids may or may not interfere with implantation and pregnancy depending on their location in the uterus, fibroids can:

- grow as a result of hormonal surges during pregnancy,
- cause miscarriages or
- “be in the way” during birth

Fibroids tend to have a large number of estrogen receptors and tend to proliferate when estrogen levels are high. Because they tend to shrink and disappear in menopausal women, it is believed that excess estrogen and hormonal imbalances can cause them.

Types of Fibroids

Fibroids are classified according to where they are in the uterus. There are:

- **Intramural fibroids.** These are fibroids that grow in the uterine wall. Intramural fibroids are the most common fibroids in women.
- **Subserosal fibroids.** These fibroids grow outside of the uterine lining. Since they grow outside the uterine lining and protrude outward, they can cause pressure or pain in the surrounding organs.
- **Submucosal fibroids.** Submucosal fibroids are the growths found underneath the uterine lining and bulge into the uterine cavity.
- **Pedunculated fibroids.** These are benign growths attached to the uterine wall through a stalk-like growth called a peduncle. The peduncle is the distinguishing feature of pedunculated fibroids.

Q: Are fibroids common?

A: Yes, they are common. Fibroids affect approximately 1 in 4 women under 50 years of age.

Q: Can fibroids make you infertile?
A: They don’t necessarily lead to infertility but they can ‘be in the way’ of a fertilized egg wanting to implant, complicate the pregnancy and cause a miscarriage.

What Exactly Causes Fibroids?

The exact cause is unknown, although excess estrogen (estrogen dominance) and inadequate proportion to progesterone has been suggested as the cause. Other factors that may predispose you to fibroids include the following:

- **Obesity.** According to one study, high BMI is associated with an increased risk for uterine fibroids in premenopausal women.
- **Eating too much red meat.** A high intake of red meat is associated with excess estrogen in the body — and we know that too much estrogen is the culprit for fibroid growth.
- **Too much sugar/refined carbohydrates in the diet.** The same goes with eating foods with too much sugar and refined carbs — these foods increase estrogen in the body and therefore predispose to uterine fibroids.
- **High blood pressure.** There may be a link between hypertension and uterine fibroids, according to one study.

Risk Factors

Women who have the following risk factors are more prone to uterine fibroids than other women:

- **Age.** Women between 30-50 are more prone to uterine fibroids.
- **Lifestyle and weight.** Women who are overweight or obese have a higher risk of developing uterine fibroids. So are women who eat unhealthy foods and consume alcohol.
- **Race.** African-American women have greater risk for uterine fibroids and are at risk of developing more severe forms of the disease.
- **Genetics.** Women with a family history of fibroids have more risk of developing the disease in their lifetime than women who have no family history of fibroids.
- **Other factors.** Women who have started menstruating early (before 10) and use various kinds of birth control are more prone to developing fibroids.

What Are the Symptoms of Fibroids?

Women with fibroids are usually asymptomatic and may not know they have existing uterine fibroids. However, the signs and symptoms of fibroids largely depend on how many there are and their size and location in your uterus. However, the following signs and symptoms may be associated with the presence of uterine fibroids:

- A lump in the lower abdomen
- Painful, frequent and heavy periods (menometrorrhagia; the combination of menorrhagia and metrorrhagia)
- **Periods** that last more than a week
- Bleeding or spotting between periods
- Anemia
- Painful intercourse
- A feeling of pressure or heaviness in the back
- Frequent urination
- difficulty trying to conceive

13 Natural Ways to Get Rid of Fibroids

Since fibroid growth in the body is associated with excess estrogen, natural treatments for uterine fibroids involve minimizing your estrogen exposure, whether in food or in the environment. Besides this, here are 13 tips you can apply to **shrink fibroids naturally** (I cover this and other natural fertility topics in my fertility program which you can learn more about here):

1. Be rigorous about exposure to pesticides and plastics.

   Once ingested, these so-called ‘Xenoestrogens’ (substances which are not hormones but act like estrogen in the body) dock on your estrogen receptors and act as real estrogen. As mentioned previously, fibroids are covered with estrogen receptors, which once activated make the fibroids grow, so you really want to make sure that you minimize your exposure to pesticides and plastics.

2. Minimize your intake of dairy and meat.

   Since animal products are the highest source of estrogen in the human diet, limit your meat intake.

3. Use a water filter and a shower filter.

   To purify your water from environmental pollutants which act as ‘reprotoxins’ (substances which disrupt hormonal balance), make use of a water and shower filter.

4. Use castor oil packs*

   Using natural remedies such as castor oil packs a couple of times per week may also help you shrink fibroids naturally.

5. Supplement.

   In addition to eating a healthy diet, you can also take good quality fish orkrill oil and curcumin supplement daily to minimize pain and inflammation associated with fibroids. If your test results show that you do have estrogen dominance you may benefit from DIM (Diindolylmethane) supplement and Calcium D-Glucarate supplement which help clear excess estrogen.

6. Boost your progesterone levels.

   Since fibroid growth is related to hormonal imbalance (progesterone deficiency and excess estrogen production), a good way to help shrink fibroids naturally is to increase your progesterone levels.
7. Increase your intake of bitter foods.

Supporting estrogen clearance from your liver has been shown to help shrink fibroids naturally. Increase your intake of bitter foods (endive, artichokes, Romaine lettuce, lemons, and grapefruits) and drink St. Mary’s thistle tea.

8. Increase your fiber intake.

Additionally, to bind to excessive estrogen in the gut, you can increase your fibre intake. Fibre-rich foods, such as apples, psyllium husks, celery stalks and broccoli are tasty additions to your diet.


Because exercise can help improve circulation and hormone balance, you can do pelvic floor exercises, light cardio or strength training to help you in managing fibroids.

10. Go organic and avoid processed foods.

Since non-organic foods may contain pesticides and fertilizers with xenoestrogens (substances which are not hormones but behave like estrogen in the body), you should eat organically grown food to minimize your intake of these hormone disruptors.

11. Avoid coffee and alcohol.

Coffee can have an estrogenic effect on the body and alcohol is pure sugar which predisposes to fat gain and therefore higher estrogen levels. While it may be initially challenging to give up coffee or alcohol, this can add enormous fertility benefits in your body.

12. Go spicy.

Additionally, increasing your intake of spicy foods such as ginger, chilli and cinnamon can also help you manage fibroids naturally.

13. Seek out help.

While all these tips will help you shrink fibroids naturally, it is best to seek out help from a qualified naturopath as there are many herbal preparations which can assist with reduction of fibroid size and heavy periods.

5 Steps in Making a Castor Oil Pack*

What to do:

1. To make a castor oil pack, use an old cotton t-shirt or an old wool jumper you will not wear again. You need to be able to cover your lower abdomen with the fabric when folded a few times.
2. Soak the fabric in cold-pressed castor oil and squeeze the excess.
3. Place a towel on the floor or the sofa or bed where you’ll be laying.
4. Place the castor oil on your abdomen and cover with a large baking paper sheet.
5. Place a warm water bottle or a heating pad on top of the baking paper and leave for 30 min to an hour.

Do not use the pack if you suspect you might be pregnant, are menstruating or if you have any open cuts.

Other Ways to Shrink Fibroids Naturally

- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Since obesity is considered a risk factor in developing uterine fibroids, make sure to keep a healthy weight or try to lose a little weight in case you are overweight or obese.
- **Eat a healthy diet.** Make sure to incorporate *whole, organic foods* in your diet and steer clear of fast food and processed food.
- **Try traditional or alternative medicine** but only as advised by your naturopath. If you're already taking prescriptions for fibroids, consult your doctor first if you're planning to take herbal treatments.

**Takeaway**

Uterine fibroids are common in women. They may be harmless, but depending on where they are, their size or their number, they may affect your fertility, may cause miscarriage or may interfere with pregnancy. Fibroids may shrink after menopause, but in some cases, they can cause unpleasant symptoms. If you're looking for non-surgical ways to manage your fibroids, you can try our 13 tips to shrink fibroids naturally!

**References**


**Related Articles**

- How To Treat Fibroids Naturally
- Natural Treatments for Endometriosis: Reduce Your Estrogen Levels
- Natural Treatment For Ovarian Cysts
- Success Story: Suffered from Fibroids Yet Conceived at 44!