**Uterine Fibroid Embolization (UFE)**

What is Uterine Fibroid Embolization?

Uterine Fibroid Embolization, or “UFE”, is non-surgical treatment option that can be applied to most women with symptomatic uterine fibroids. A small catheter (tube) is inserted into the uterine arteries to deliver microscopic particles that block the blood supply to the fibroids. As a result, the fibroids will shrink and soften in the months that follow, which reduces both bleeding and bulk symptoms.

Is UFE effective?

Yes. UFE has comparable long-term outcomes to more invasive procedures, such as myomectomy, with the advantage of a speedier recovery, typically 1-2 weeks.

Who is a candidate?

* All women with symptomatic fibroids are candidates.
* Certain medical conditions, such as anaphylaxis to radiographic contrast agents, may affect whether UFE is the best option for you.

What are the limitations of the procedure?

After UFE, most fibroids will shrink by about 60% of their volume. When fibroids are very large or numerous, the abdomen may still look big after UFE, even though symptoms have resolved.

What factors determine maximum success?

* Starting with non-massive fibroids that all show enhancement during the MRI scan practically guarantees a successful result.
* Long-term success depends on the time until menopause (average age in the US is 51 years) where fibroids will stop growth
* The uterus may continue to make new fibroids, but hopefully they will not grow fast enough or in a location that produces new symptoms that require treatment.

What are the advantages?

* **No general anesthesia:** Only minimal “twilight” sedation is required.
* **No surgical scar:** Access is via the radial (wrist) artery in most cases.
* **Quick procedure:** Generally 1-2 hours, with no pain or awareness of anything internally.
* **Quick recovery:** Symptoms after the procedure feel like a period and some patients can go home same day.

Back to work usually in 1-2 weeks depending on fatigue that normally follows as you heal.

How long before I can expect symptom relief?

* The effects are not immediate. Most women start feeling relief within a few weeks as the fibroids begin to shrink and soften, with urinary frequency often being the first indicator of success.
* Menstrual symptoms improve with each cycle over 4-6 months, as the fibroids shrink.
* For fibroids that are in the uterine cavity, small pieces of tissue (or occasionally a whole fibroid) may be shed during menses.

Where can I find more information?

Please look at the video on Stanford website for further details