



Uterine fibroid embolisation aftercare advice

This information sheet gives advice following embolisation of uterine fibroids. If you have any other queries please call the Radiology Department on 0118 322 8368.

What can I expect after the procedure?

- **Pelvic pain:** this can be severe in the first 6-12 hours after the procedure. Once discharged from hospital your pain should have improved, but in some patients can be problematic. You may need to take a combination of regular paracetamol, ibuprofen and a stronger painkiller such as tramadol or codeine. (Most patients are routinely prescribed codeine or tramadol to take home). Three days following the procedure the pain has usually improved considerably and many of the painkillers can be discontinued.
- **Constipation:** the side effect of some of the stronger painkillers can cause constipation. We prescribe laxatives in hospital to minimize this.
- For the first week you may feel **tired and 'flu-ey'**. This is normal and will settle.
- **Puncture site (groin or wrist):** Occasionally there may be a small bruise and slight discomfort at the site of the wound which will settle after a few days. However, if the pain becomes severe and there is a hard lump please call the Radiology Department 0118 322 8368, Mon-Fri 9am-5pm.
- **Vaginal discharge:** It is uncommon to experience vaginal discharge following the procedure, although if it occurs it may persist for a few weeks or even months before settling. It is possible to pass fragments of fibroid, particularly if the fibroid is situated within the womb cavity. If the discharge becomes severe and persistent, you will need to be reviewed by your referring gynaecologist. In this event, please also contact the Radiology Department 0118 322 8368, Mon-Fri 9am-5pm.

Precautions

- **Driving:** You may drive 24 hours after the procedure although someone else should drive you home from hospital. Avoid driving while taking strong painkillers as they may impair your judgment and reflexes. They may also render your car insurance void if you were to have an accident.
- **Tampons:** Please avoid using tampons for the first 6 weeks and use sanitary towels instead. This is to minimise the small risk of infection. Your periods may continue as normal, or vary considerably for the first 1 or 2 months but will usually get back to normal timing, usually with far less bleeding and discomfort.

- **Sexual intercourse:** Please avoid sexual intercourse for the first 2 weeks following the procedure. Condoms are recommended for the following 4 weeks.
- **Pregnancy:** if you wish to become pregnant it is recommended you wait 6 months after the procedure before trying.

Please call your GP if you experience any of the following:

- Severe pain that is not being controlled with paracetamol, ibuprofen or other painkillers, such as codeine or tramadol which you may have been given.
- Smelly yellow or green discharge with pelvic pain and a fever. This could indicate that you have an infection and antibiotics are recommended.

Follow-up

We will send you a follow-up appointment for 3 months' time when the full effects of the embolisation can be assessed.

Contacting us

Radiology Department, Tel 0118 322 7991.

Radiology Day Case Unit, Tel 0118 322 8368 (Monday-Friday 8.30am-5pm).

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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Dr Archie Speirs, RBFT Radiology Department, May 2024

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