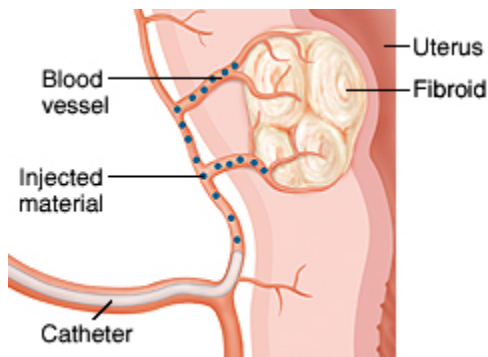


Uterine Fibroid Embolization

Fibroids are benign (not cancerous) growths of muscle tissue on or inside the uterus. To shrink a fibroid, a procedure called **uterine fibroid embolization** can be done. It stops the fibroid's blood supply. The procedure is often done by a specially trained doctor called an interventional radiologist.



During the Procedure

- You lie on an x-ray table. An IV line is put into a vein in your arm or hand. This line gives you fluids and medications. You may be given medication that relaxes you and makes you sleepy.
- Skin on your groin is numbed with local anesthetic. Then, a small incision is made. A needle attached to a thin wire is put through the incision. The wire is put into a blood vessel near the groin.
- A **catheter** (long, thin, flexible tube) is placed over the guide wire into the blood vessel.
- Contrast is injected through the catheter. This helps the blood vessels and catheter show up better on x-rays. The movement of the catheter can then be seen on a video screen.
- Using x-ray images as a guide, the radiologist moves the catheter through the blood vessel. It is moved into the artery that supplies blood to the uterus.
- The catheter is moved near the fibroid. The radiologist then injects tiny grains of plastic or spongy material into the artery. These grains flow to the smaller vessels that supply the fibroid and block blood flow to them. The procedure is repeated on the other side of the uterus.
- The entire procedure takes about 1 to 2 hours.