Questions for Your Doctor, Questions for Yourself

What women need to know about uterine fibroids

February 1, 2021 By Jeanette L. Pinnace

We may think we have the best doctor in the world. But even the most knowledgeable physician needs input from their patients. Health providers are human and can be unclear, or make mistakes communicating information to patients. The days when doctors were looked upon as infallible or all-knowing are gone. Realize that your doctor's goals in treating you might be completely different from your own objectives. The outcome for a treatment that he or she might consider satisfactory may not be viewed in the same way through a patient's eyes.

This is why it is imperative that women prepare for a visit to their doctor by writing down any questions they may have about their experience with uterine fibroids. Below are some steps to take to help get the answers you may need from your physician. Very important: Always ask the question that is most important to you first.

Write down any symptoms you have, even if it seems unrelated to fibroids.

List all the medications you are currently take including vitamins and herbs. Don't forget to note how many times you take these supplements and in what dosages.

Take notes. So many times, patients forget the instructions their doctor provides. You might find that your anxiety level skyrockets, which may prevent you from absorbing certain information.

Some Questions Your Doctor May Ask You:

- What symptoms do you have?
- How long have you had these symptoms?
- How often do the symptoms occur?
- How severe are these symptoms?
- Do your symptoms occur when you are menstruating?
- What makes the symptoms better?

- What make the symptoms worse?
- Is there a family history of fibroids?

Some Questions for Your Doctor:

- What are the treatment options available to me?

  You will want to know this information so that you can make the best possible choice for you and your family. You should be aware of all the alternatives available to you.

- What should I expect after treatment?

  Often life is the same after certain treatment. Certain treatments may leave you feeling only a little better than you did before. All your symptoms may not go away.

- How long will treatment take?

  This will depend on well you respond to treatment. However, having some idea of the time it might take to start feeling well will help you to make long-term plans for your life and your family's well-being.

- Are there things I can do to improve the outcome of my condition?

  This may involve lifestyle changes that can impact the course of the disease. Ask about exercise, a healthy diet, quitting smoking and other behavior modifications that can improve your health outcome.

- What adverse side effects might the treatment entail?

  A woman needs to know how a treatment might affect her body so she knows what to expect. Only you can determine what is normal for you and what is not.

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