



the women's
the royal women's hospital

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Treating your Fibroids with MRI

This is a treatment that uses MRI *and* ultrasound to find your fibroids and then to remove them. The technique allows us to look inside your body and to heat up and destroy unwanted tissue.

The treatment is not surgery; there are no incisions or cuts into your body. It is done by a Radiologist in the Imaging Department with an MRI Technologist and radiology Nurse present. It is a non-invasive treatment aimed at reducing your symptoms; such as abdominal pain and cramping, heavy menstrual bleeding, anaemia, distended stomachs, and constipation, which can all be caused by uterine fibroids.

What happens during the procedure?

You will need to lie on your stomach in the MRI machine for up to three to four hours. During this time the MRI will take images of your fibroids, uterus and abdomen; measuring size, shape and temperature. The ultrasound is then used to heat up and destroy the fibroid at specifically measured points.

You will be given a light sedation to help you relax, however you will be conscious and able to communicate with the technologist during the whole procedure. Towards the end of the procedure you will be given an injection of a special dye to see how the fibroids have reacted and to see if the treatment has been successful.

What happens after the procedure?

You will stay in hospital for up to two hours after the treatment so that we can make sure you are well. After the treatment you may feel cramping (similar to a menstrual pain), nausea and soreness in the shoulders from lying flat. If necessary, you may be given some light pain relief medication. You will usually be able to return to work in a few days.

How can I use the service?

You will need a referral from your GP to the Royal Women's Hospital Gynaecology clinic – Gynae 1. The specially trained doctors at the gynaecology clinic will check to make sure you are suitable for the treatment. The doctor will organise a screening MRI for you in the Imaging department. Your private specialist can also request a screening MRI to assess suitability for treatment.

If you wish to provide your GP or Specialist with more information about our service you can contact the **Pauline Gandel Women's Imaging Department for more information on 8345 2250**

What are the risks?

Risks include:

- possible skin burns
- back or leg pain
- nerve damage
- nausea
- abdominal cramping
- fever
- vaginal discharge
- urinary tract infection.

The risks are relatively low. There is also a risk that the treatment will not work or that the fibroids may grow back. This is true for all fibroid treatments except hysterectomy. Compared with hysterectomy (according to an early study) the number of patients with at least one significant clinical complication was 12% as opposed to 46% with hysterectomy.

What makes this procedure different to others that treat fibroids, is that this is not an operation and it does not involve anaesthetic. Other procedures involve a hospital stay, sometimes for up to three or four days.

Treating fibroids with MRI is an outpatient procedure where you are awake the whole time and can expect to spend five to six hours in the Imaging department. Some women find the prospect of lying still for that long very difficult.

Studies show that this option has less chance of complications associated with anaesthetic, surgery, infection and transfusion.¹

Pregnancy

Please discuss this procedure with your doctor if you intend to fall pregnant in the future. Early studies have suggested an improvement in fertility in some patients.

Contacts

For more information please do not hesitate to contact the Pauline Gandel Women's Imaging Centre on 8345 2250 or go to our website www.thewomens.org.au

For more information

<http://www.insightec.com/>

¹ U. S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) 2005, *Summary of safety and effectiveness data*, pp.1-32 (<http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/PDF4/p040003b.pdf>).

The Pauline Gandel Women's Imaging Centre

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Telephone 8345 2250, Monday to Friday 8.30-5pm.

The Women's Health Information Centre

For more information about any women's health issue

Drop in, telephone or email

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