



Fight fibroids

Dr. Rishma Dhillon Pai uses MRI guided focused ultrasound at Jaslok Hospital to treat fibroids without surgery, says Aditi Mallya

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Fibroids are common tumours of the uterus (womb) found in over 20% of young women. There are firm, ball like and may vary in size from pin point to very large. Fibroids are diagnosed by the history, gynecological examination and sonography. Their management depends upon their size and location, the age of the patient, the symptoms the patient has and the patient's desire for children in the future.

There are Subserosal fibroids, which grow on the outer side of the uterus and Intramural fibroids, which lie in the middle of the womb. The fibroids which cause maximal problems are the submucous ones. These grow on the inner side of the womb, where the baby grows or the part which sheds during menses. Even small submucous fibroids can cause pain, heavy and irregular menses, infertility, recurrent abortions and difficulty in normal delivery.

Most fibroids need surgery but for the first time in Asia, there is a method to treat the common problem of fibroids, without surgery.

According to Dr. Rishma Dhillon Pai, consultant gynecologist at Lilavati Hospital and Jaslok Hospital says, "Till now, fibroids could only be treated by operation but now with the introduction of the MRI guided focused ultrasound (MRgFUS) at Jaslok hospital in Mumbai for the first time there is an alternative. Treatment of fibroids can now be done without surgery, hospitalisation and anaesthesia."

The procedure is done under MRI guidance, takes 1-2 hours and most fibroids can be comfortably treated. This technique uses heat energy to stop the blood going to the fibroid and hence causes it to reduce in size. As the MRI is an accurate technique, the fibroid is properly localised and a fine beam of ultrasound waves is focused on the fibroid raising temperature within it so as to cause necrosis. The patient has no pain during or after the procedure. She is able to go home the same day and can resume work the next day.

Women in their 20's to those in their 50's, should go in for regular checkups.



YOU CAN STILL HAVE CHILDREN

"Patients can walk in, treat their fibroids and walk out without an operation. The womb is preserved and so is fertility. The patient can safely have children in the future. The procedure has a very low risk."

Dr. Rishma Dhillon Pai