

Fibroids History

Actor briefing

You are a 35 year old female trying to get pregnant for the 2nd time. You have a healthy 2 year old son. You have been trying for 6 months or so and are worried it has taken so long. You have been having increasingly heavy periods for the past 9 months, which are starting to get unbearable. They are now very heavy, and are lasting up to 10 days. Normal for you is around 5 days. If specifically asked, you are now using both a pad and a tampon and you are having to change every hour and a half. You get frequent flooding and are now scared to go out on the first couple of days of your period due to accidents. Your cycles have not changed, and are 29 days in length. You started your periods at 14. They have never been particularly painful. Again if asked specifically, you are feeling very tired and lethargic, and beginning to get a little short of breath walking up the stairs to your 3rd floor flat, though you just attribute this to having a young son. No previous gynaecological history, and your son was born by normal delivery. You suffer from mild asthma, which has been well controlled on a reliever and steroid inhaler. You have family history of endometrial cancer on your mothers side. You live with your husband and son, and do not smoke or drink. You take no regular medications apart from pre pregnancy vitamins. You have noticed no weight loss or fevers. If asked directly, you are worried you have left it too late to be trying for another baby.

Mark sheet

Introduces self and gains consent from patient	1
Establishes rapport with patient	1
Begins with open questions	1
Explores presenting complaint	1
Establishes heavy bleeding	1
Explores associated symptoms eg pain	1
Assesses change in period length	1
Asks about flooding/clots	1
Asks about pads/tampons	1
Establishes impact on quality of life	1
Asks about anaemia symptoms	1
Asks red flag symptoms	1
Asks relevant obs/ gynae history	1
Asks PMHx	1
Asks social history	1
Asks medication use	1
Asks drug allergies	1
Asks relevant family history	1
Explores ideas, concerns, expectations	1
Gives differentials: fibroids, endometrial hyperplasia/ cancer, endometrial polyps	1
Examiner global points	5
Patient global marks	5
Total score	/ 30

Fibroids Cheat Sheet

What are they?

- Benign smooth muscle growth
- Oestrogen dependent → shrink after menopause/ on hormonal treatment, increase in pregnancy

Location

- Subserosal (in the uterus)
- Intramural
- Extramural -> pedunculated (on a stalk) → can cause severe pain if torted.

Symptoms

- Heavy bleeding
- Increasing symptoms of anaemia
- Lower abdominal pain
- Cramping/ bloating

Complications

- Fertility – can cause a secondary cause of infertility
- Mass effect – can obstruct of surrounding structures eg urinary symptoms and in extreme cases cause a palpable/visible mass
- Degeneration – caused by lack of blood supply, often in pregnancy. Causes pain and bleeding

Treatment

- If fertility not wanted: IUS/COCP/transexamic acid (symptom control), GnRH analogues (short term for reducing size pre surgery), uterine artery embolization, hysterectomy
- If fertility wanted to be preserved: myomectomy.