

The Right and Wrong Reasons for a Hysterectomy



If you are told that you need a hysterectomy (surgical removal of the uterus), get a second opinion. Your medical insurance plan may even require it. Your condition may have other treatment options.

Hysterectomies are still warranted for:

- Large fibroids.
- Severe hemorrhaging not controlled with medication.
- Irreversible damage from an untreated infection.
- Cancer of the cervix or uterus.

Alternative treatments exist for heavy, painful periods, fibroid tumors, endometriosis, and a prolapsed uterus. If these conditions don't respond to more conservative treatment, then a hysterectomy may be warranted. So if you're told you need a hysterectomy:

- Ask about alternatives to surgery.
- Ask for specific details about the condition you're being treated for and the expected outcome of surgery.
- Ask if your ovaries can be spared, to prevent shutting off the release of estrogen and, subsequently, premature menopause.
- Don't hesitate to get a second opinion if you question the need for a hysterectomy.