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Embolisation helps with period relief in 88%

Jocelyn Wright

UTERINE artery embolisation may offer an alternative to hysterectomy for women with heavy and painful menstruation due to adenomyosis, according to an Australian study.

Clinician researchers from Sydney Adventist Hospital reviewed 117 women who were found on MRI to have adenomyosis and opted for the non-surgical procedure between 2008 and 2015 rather than undergoing a hysterectomy.

Just under half of the women in

the analysis had adenomyosis alone and 51% also had co-existing fibroids. Uterine artery embolisation, also known as fibroid embolisation, is also now offered to treat symptomatic uterine fibroids.

Women were followed up for two years after the procedure, with 88% saying their periods were now back to normal or lighter than normal.

On average, the pain score they reported during their period after

the procedure dropped more than six points, from 7.5 out of 10, to 1.3.

Embolisation, delivered by an interventional radiologist, involves using angiographic catheters to inject particles into the uterine arteries to diminish blood flow.

Lead author interventional radiologist Dr Eisen Liang, from the Sydney Adventist Hospital and University of Sydney, said the results were encouraging and would have profound implications in treatment options for these women, offering an alternative solution to radical hysterectomy.

“Uterine artery embolisation is shown to be safe and effective in treating adenomyosis-related heavy menstrual bleeding and severe period pain,” Dr Liang said.

“Failing conservative treatments, women now have a non-surgical option.”

Only 5% of women in the study

went on to have a hysterectomy, with the authors concluding that uterine artery embolisation was a viable option and would help fill the therapeutic gap between conservative

management and hysterectomy.

The research, conducted by Dr Liang and gynaecologist Dr Bevan Brown, also from the Sydney Adventist Hospital clinical school, was the largest case series study of its type.

“The results were very encouraging,” Dr Liang said.

“Ninety per cent of women were happy or very happy with the outcome, with an average quality-of-life score improving from 45 to 90.”

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