



# Data Points

RESULTS FROM THE 2005 CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S HEALTH SURVEY

**U**terine fibroids are benign (non-cancerous) tumors or growths made of muscle cells and other tissues that grow within the wall of the uterus (womb).<sup>1</sup> Uterine fibroids may cause prolonged or heavy menstrual bleeding, pelvic pain or fertility problems.

Uterine fibroids are the fifth leading cause of hospitalization for gynecologic disorders unrelated to pregnancy among United States (U.S.) women aged 15 to 44, and they are the most frequent reason for hysterectomy (surgery to remove the uterus) among U.S. women of all ages.<sup>2,3</sup>

To obtain a baseline estimate of the prevalence of uterine fibroids among California women, the 2005 California Women's Health Survey (CWHS) asked the following question of respondents aged 18 and older: "Has a doctor or other medical care provider ever told you that you had uterine fibroids?"

More than 700 women, about 14.3 percent of the respondents (N = 4,284), reported being told that they had fibroids.

- Prevalence of uterine fibroids differed statistically between women aged 18 to 44 (6.6 percent) and women aged 45 and older (23.6 percent).<sup>4</sup>
- Prevalence also differed statistically by race/ethnicity: Black/African Americans reported the highest rates (25.9 percent), followed by Whites (16.8 percent), Asian/Others (11.5 percent), and Hispanics (7.9 percent).<sup>4</sup>
- Almost four times more respondents with uterine fibroids stated that they had had a hysterectomy (47.6 percent) than women without uterine fibroids (12.5 percent).<sup>4</sup>
- More women with uterine fibroids sought fertility services to help them ovulate or become pregnant (16.5 percent) than women without uterine fibroids (7.7 percent).<sup>4</sup> Almost half of the women with uterine fibroids who sought fertility services reported that they had undergone surgery or drug treatment for their fibroids.

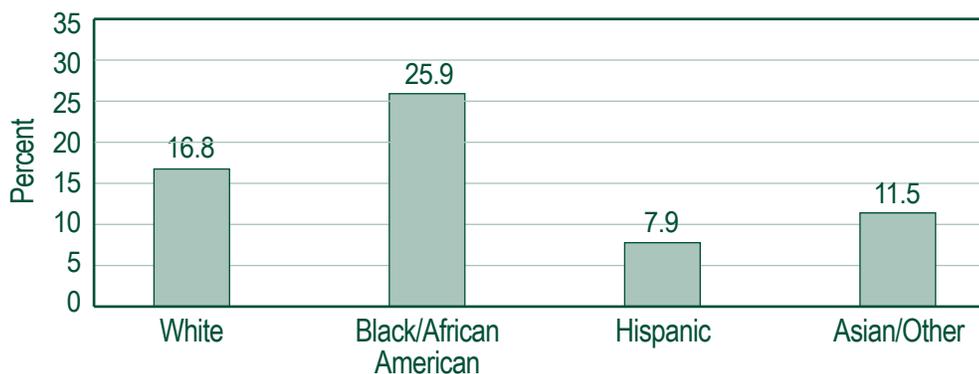
## History of Uterine Fibroids Reported by California Women

Department of Health  
Care Services  
California Department of  
Public Health  
Office of Women's Health

### Public Health Message:

*Uterine fibroids are a treatable condition that are associated with fertility problems and may result in hysterectomy. Differences in prevalence rates and the course of the condition could be explained by differences in access and use of health care services. Education and research are needed to increase knowledge of uterine fibroids, find new methods of treatment, and develop alternatives to hysterectomy.*

**Women Reporting That They Were Ever Diagnosed With Uterine Fibroids, by Race/Ethnicity, California, 2005**



Source: California Women's Health Survey, 2005

Issue 5, Summer 2008, Num. 15

## **History of Uterine Fibroids Reported by California Women**

Department of Health  
Care Services  
California Department of  
Public Health  
Office of Women's Health

- 1 The National Women's Health Information Center. Uterine Fibroids. US Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health; July 2007. Available at: <http://www.healthywomen.org/healthtopics/fibroids>
- 2 The National Women's Health Information Center. Hysterectomy. US Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health; July 2007. Available at: <http://www.healthywomen.org/Page.do?pageCode=healthcenter-hysterectomy>
- 3 Marshall LM, Spiegelman D, Barbieri RL, et al. Variation in the incidence of uterine leiomyoma among premenopausal women by age and race. *Obstet Gynecol* 1997; 90(6): 967-973.
- 4 Comparisons differ statistically, chi-square test,  $P < .05$ .

Submitted by: Zipora Weinbaum, Ph.D., and Terri Thorfinnson, J.D.,  
Department of Health Care Services, California Department of Public Health,  
Office of Women's Health, (916) 440-7626, [Terri.Thorfinnson@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:Terri.Thorfinnson@dhcs.ca.gov)