

Managing Uterine Fibroids without the Knife

A WEBINAR ORGANISED BY
THE ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIAN PRIVATE MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS
(ANPMP)

Dr. Abayomi Ajayi
Fibroid Care Centre @ Nordica
15th August, 2023



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Greetings from...



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Synopsis

- Introduction
- Diagnosis
- Treatment options
- HIFU: Experience in Nigeria
- Conclusion



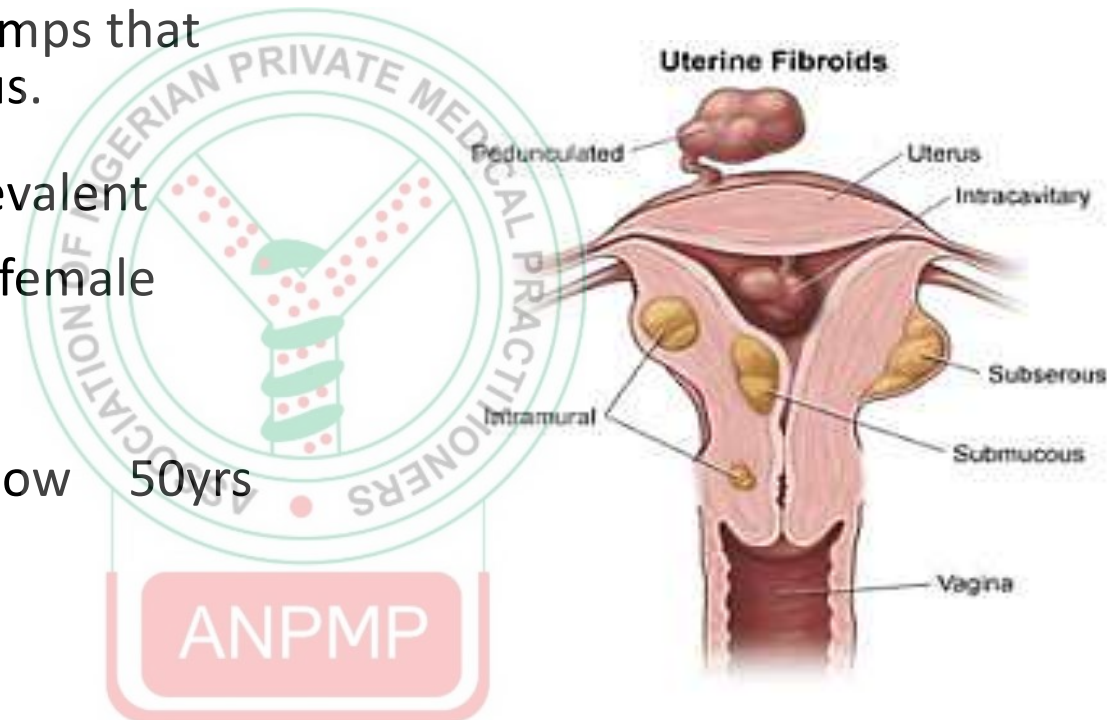
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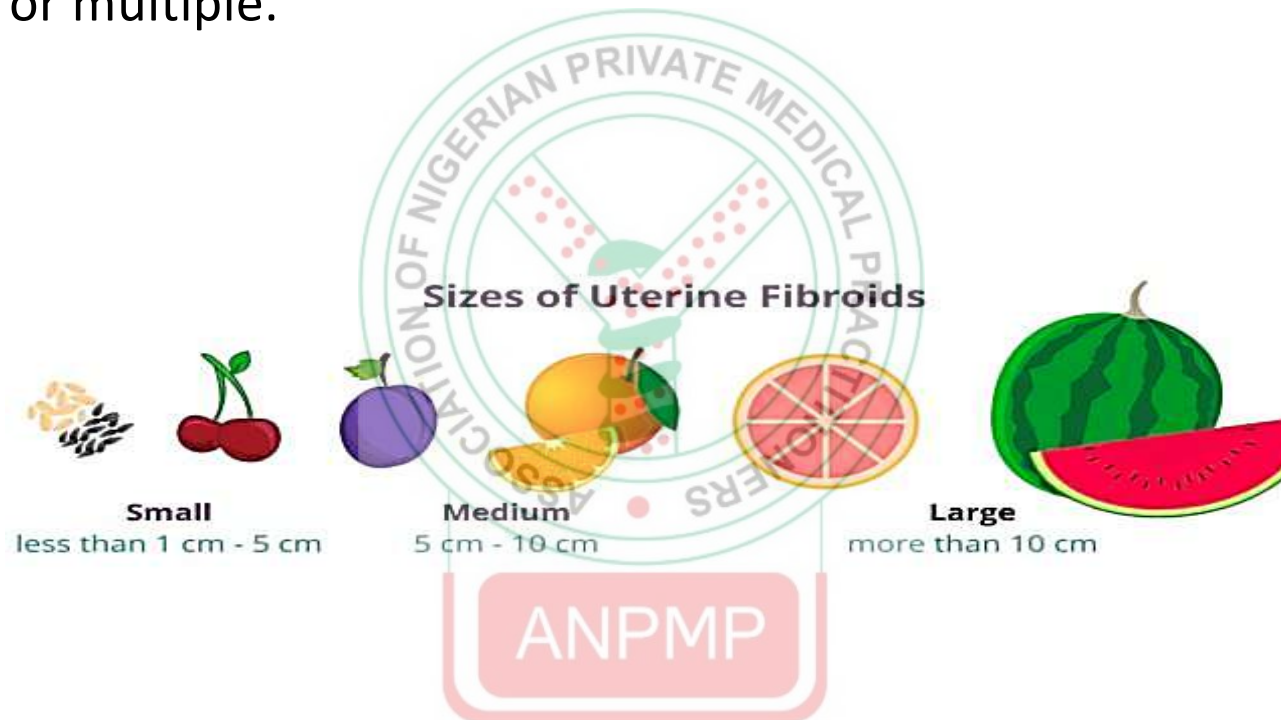
Introduction

- Fibroids are benign lumps that grow in / on the uterus.
- They are the most prevalent benign tumors of the female pelvis:

70-80% of women below 50yrs will have fibroids.



- Range in size from seedlings (undetectable by the human eye) to bulky masses that can enlarge and distort the uterus.
- Single or multiple.



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- Not unusual to see them expanding the uterus to as much as the ribcage and can add weight.
- Usually in women of child bearing age but can show up at any age.
- Tend to be commoner in blacks than whites (don't know why).

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Causes

- Not sure but Hormones and Genetics may play a part.



Risk factors for uterine fibroids

- Age
- Race
- Getting your period at a very young age
- Birth control use
- Being overweight
- Eating too much red meat and not enough green vegetables, fruits or dairy.
- Alcohol
- Family history: Women who have a 1st relative with fibroids are more likely to have it.



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Symptoms

Many women are asymptomatic: incidental finding.

Other symptoms include:

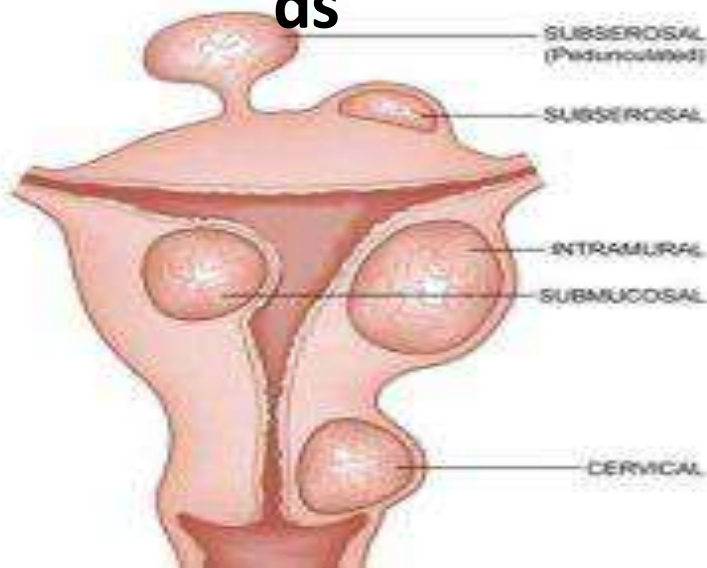
- Heavy menstrual bleeding
- Prolonged menstrual periods usually for more than a week
- Bleeding between periods
- Pelvic pressure or pain.
 - Frequent Urination
 - Difficulty emptying the bladder



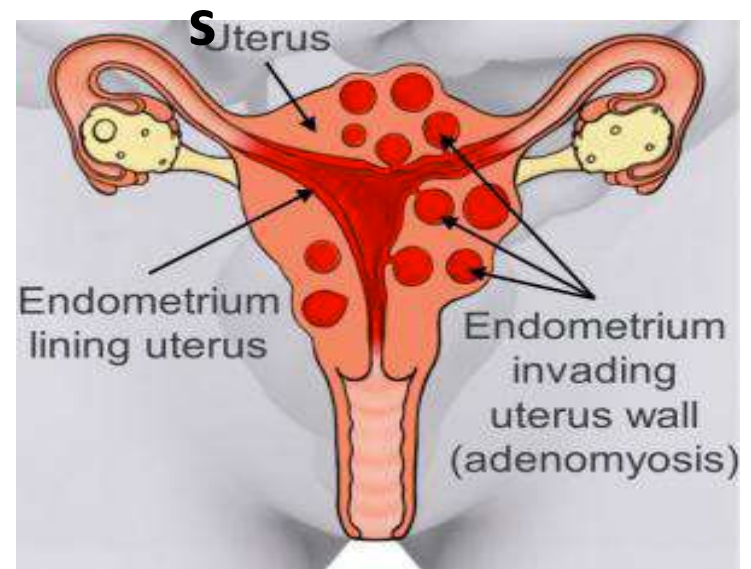
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Fibroids

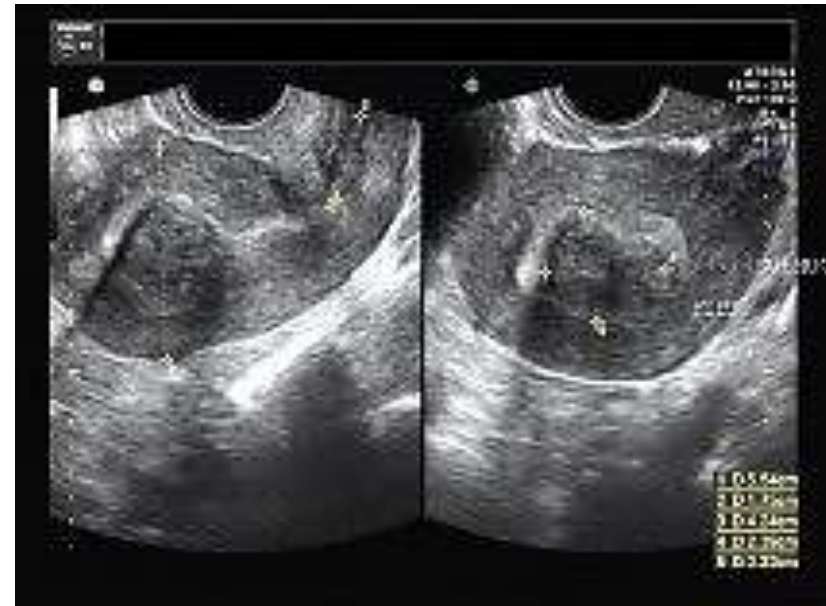
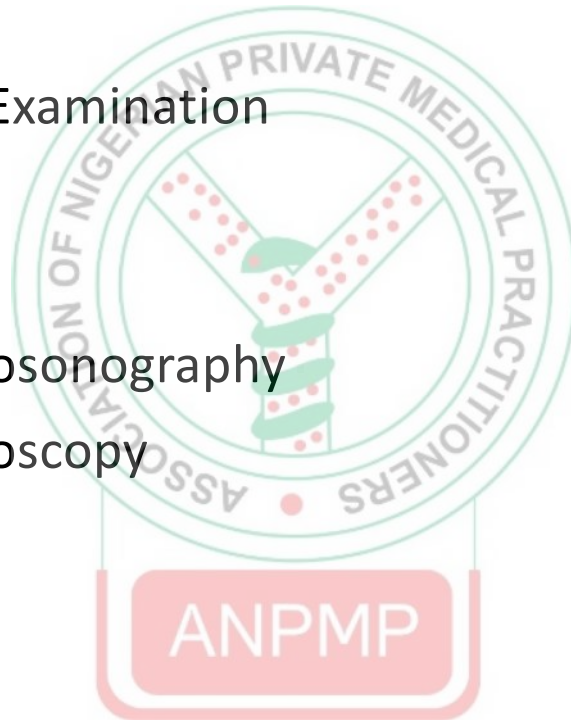


Adenomyosis



Diagnosis

- Pelvic Examination
- USS
- MRI
- Hysterosonography
- Hysteroscopy



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Treatment

The treatment of fibroids is usually dependent on:

- Age
- Presence of symptoms
- Desire to get pregnant
- Location of fibroid



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Treatment options

- Watchful Waiting: Wait and see...

They are not cancerous and usually grow slowly. They may shrink after menopause.

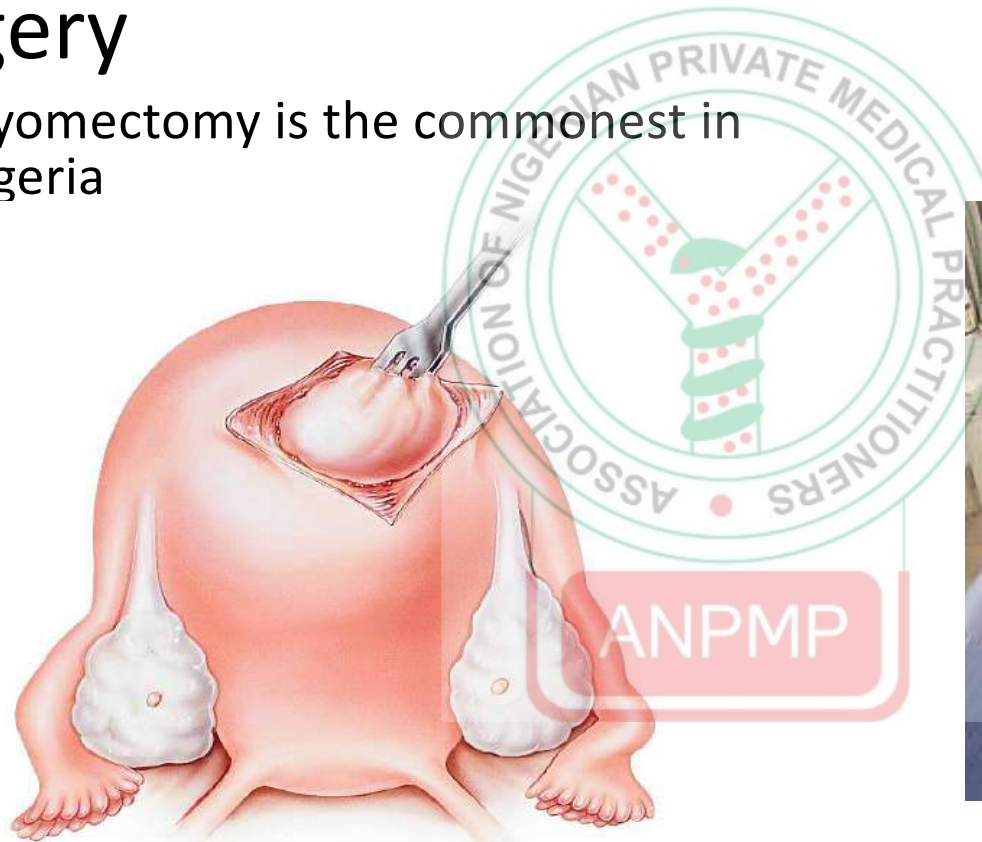
- Medications:

- Analgesic: Tranexamic acid
- Oral Pills
- GnRH agonist
- Selective oestrogen receptor modulators (SERM)
- Progestin-releasing IUD
- Oral GnRH antagonist: Elagolix



Surgery

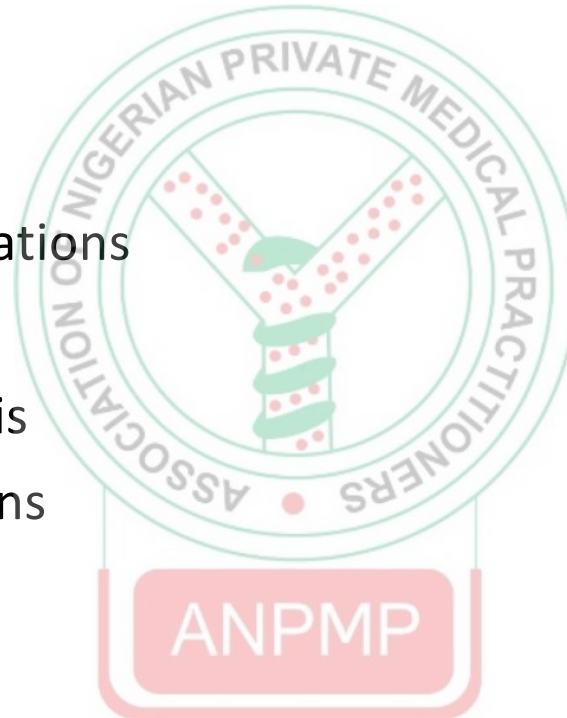
- Myomectomy is the commonest in Nigeria



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Complications

- Blood loss
- Anaesthetic complications
- Infection
- Deep vein thrombosis
- Intrauterine adhesions



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- Watchful Waiting: Wait and see...



Gynecology & Obstetrics

Ajayi et al., Gynecol Obstet (Sunnyvale) 2017, 7:4

DOI: 10.4172/2161-0932.1000436

Research Article

OMICS International

Risk Factors for Intrauterine Adhesions in a Black African Population - Nigerians

Abayomi B Ajayi¹, Bamgboye M Afolabi², Victor Ajayi¹, Oluwafunmilola Biobabu¹, Ifeoluwa Oyetunji¹, Happiness Aikhuele¹, Arati Sohoni¹

¹*Nordica Fertility Center, 106 Norman-Williams Street, Ikoyi Lagos, Nigeria*

²*Health, Environment and Development Foundation, 34 Montgomery Road, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria*

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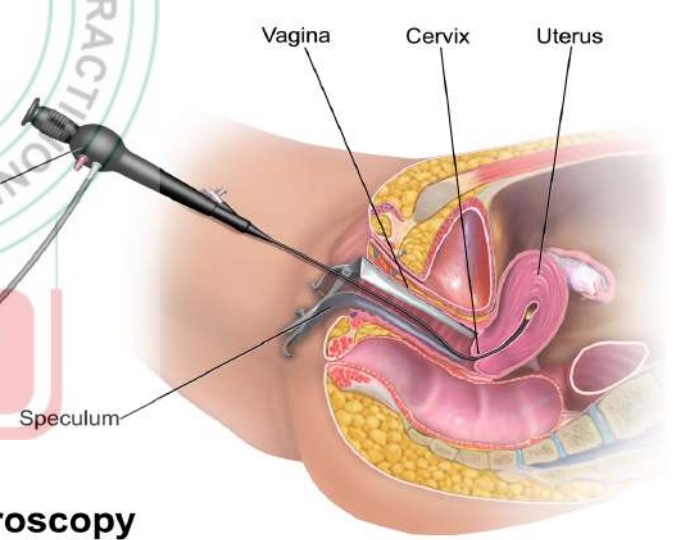
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Endoscopy

- Laparoscopy



- Hysteroscopy



Hysteroscopy

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- Watchful Waiting: Wait and see...

They are not cancerous and usually grow slowly. They may shrink

> *J Minim Invasive Gynecol.* 2015 Nov-Dec;22(6S):S235. doi: 10.1016/j.jmig.2015.08.893.

Epub 2015 Oct 15.

Laparoscopic Myomectomy: A 6-Year Experience at Nordica Fertility Center, Lagos, Nigeria

A Ajayi¹, V Ajayi¹, O Biobaku¹, I Oyetunji¹, H Aikhuele¹, O Adejuwon¹, B M Afolabi²

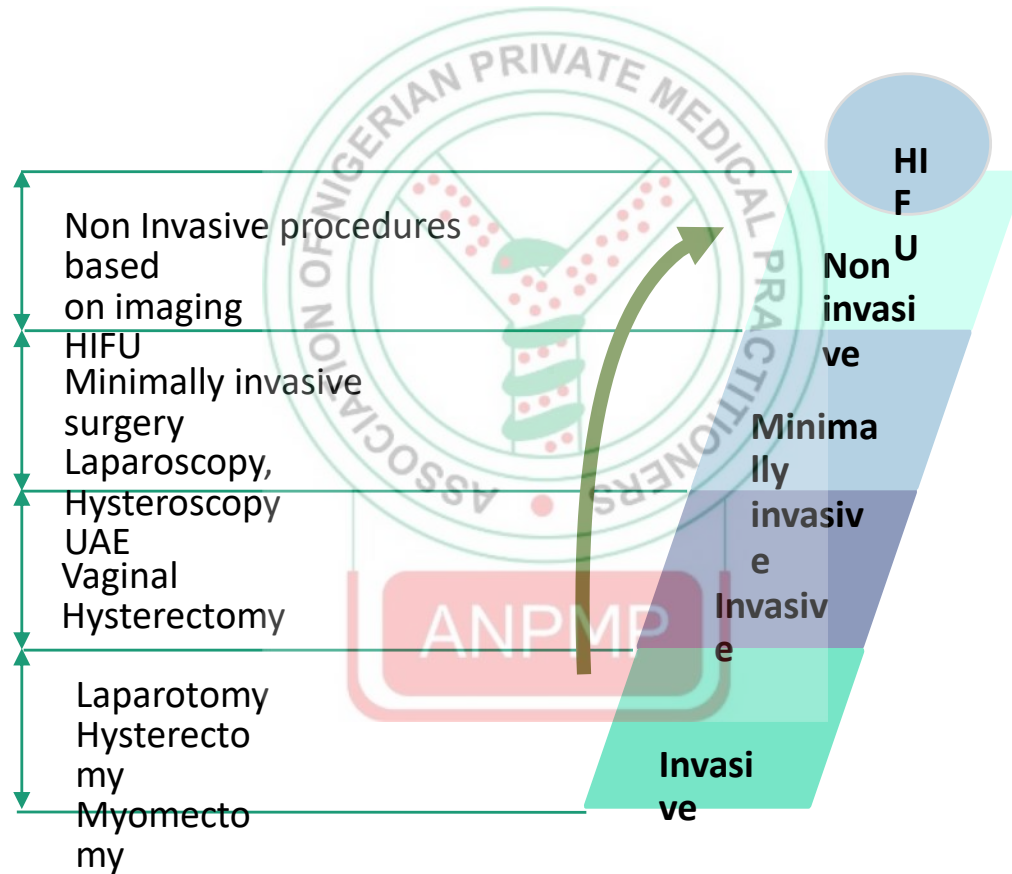
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PMID: 27679140 DOI: 10.1016/j.jmig.2015.08.893

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Evolution of Surgical Options



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Seeing into the future ...



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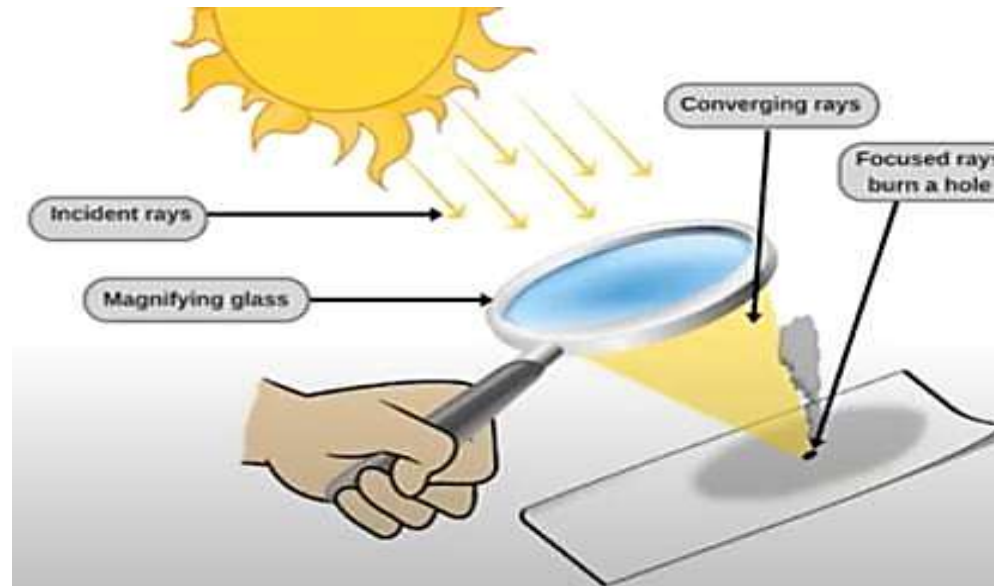


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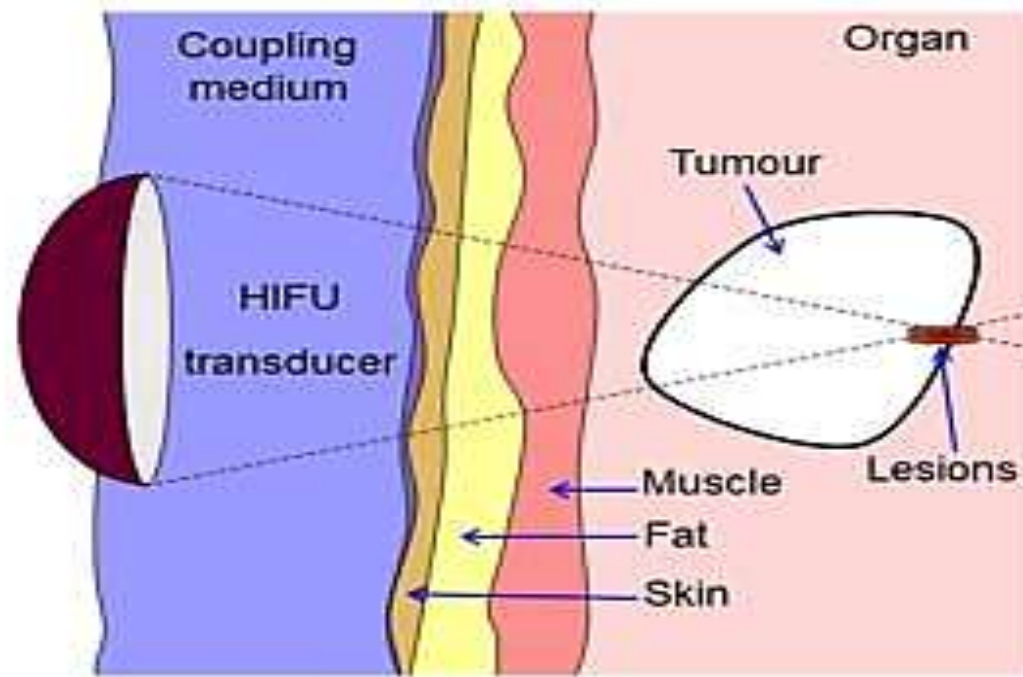


How does HIFU work?

High intensity focused ultrasound is a non-invasive technique that uses non-ionizing ultrasonic waves to heat or ablate tissues.



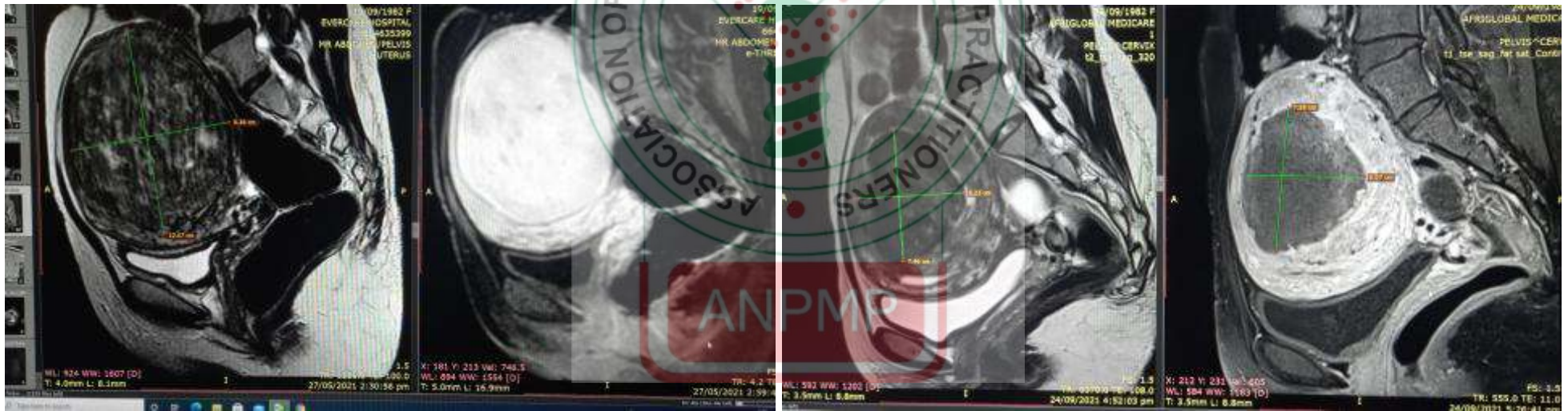
High-intensity focused ultrasound



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HIFU does not remove fibroids rather it kills it by coagulative necrosis, shrinkage and relief of symptoms



Shrinkage rates with MRI

A retrospective study of ultrasound-guided high intensity focused ultrasound ablation for multiple uterine fibroids in South Africa

[Min He 1, Hayley Jacobson 2, Cai Zhang 1, Raymond Setzen 2, Lian Zhang 1](#)

PMID: 29278943 DOI: [10.1080/02656736.2017.1421323](https://doi.org/10.1080/02656736.2017.1421323)

Ultrasound-Guided High-Intensity Focused Ultrasound for Devascularization of Uterine Fibroid: A Feasibility Study

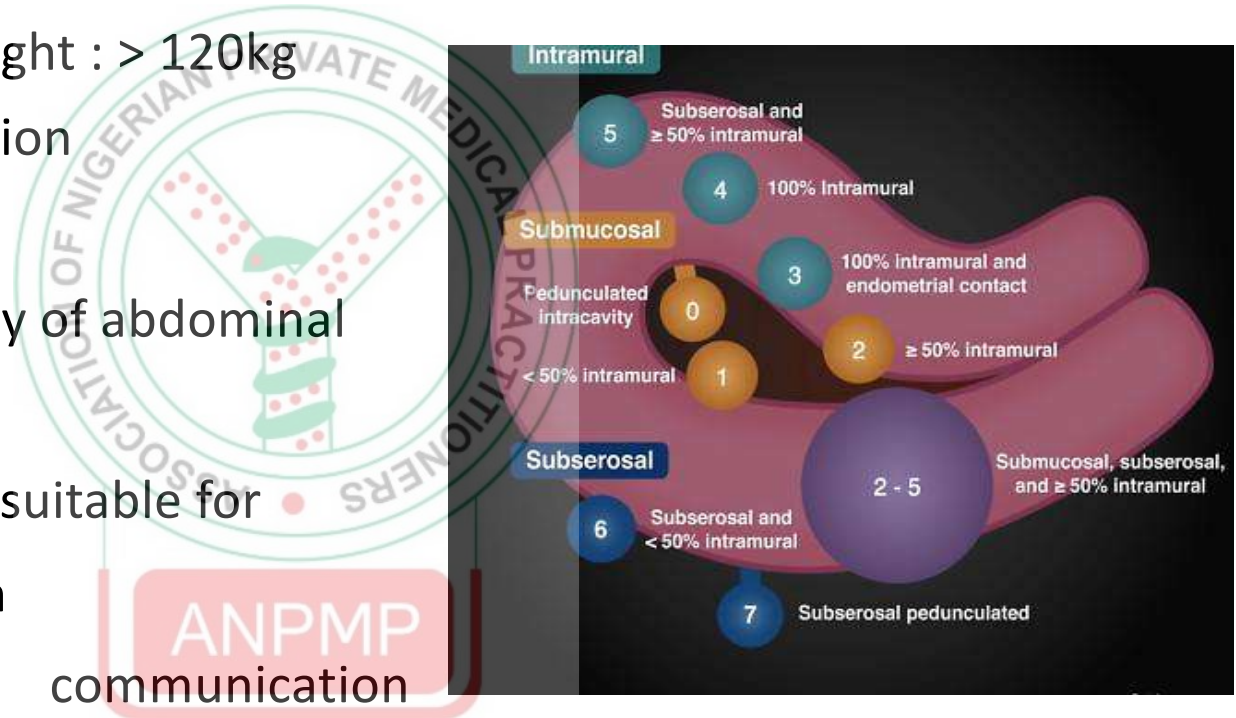
[Yun Zhou, 1 Xiang Ji, Jianmei Mu, Taotao Sun, Zhaoxia Qian, Yuhong Li, Jiangjing Yuan, Qiong Fan, Qianwen Huang, Jingfeng Bai, Yudong Wang](#)

Published: June 16, 2021
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ultrasmedbio.2021.05.012>



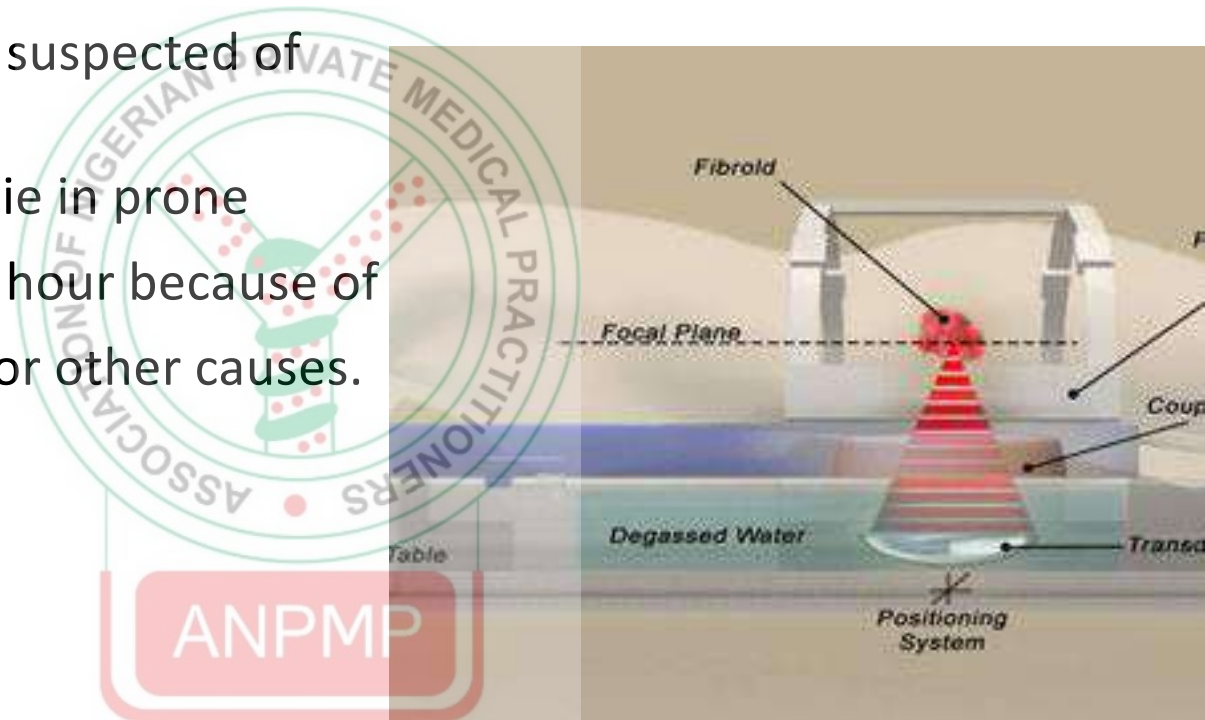
Is HIFU for everyone?... Relative contraindications

- Significantly over weight : > 120kg
- Mid line vertical incision
- Fibroid Type 0 and 7
- Patients with a history of abdominal liposuction
- Patients that are not suitable for analgesia and sedation
- Patients with communication difficulties



Absolute contraindications

- Patients with fibroids suspected of malignancy
- Patients who cannot lie in prone position for at least 1 hour because of lumbar disc diseases or other causes.



Advantages

- Day procedure
- Non invasive
 - uterine sparing
 - precise ablation to target area
 - doesn't affect normal uterine tissue
 - allows for normal vaginal delivery in future pregnancies
- No general anaesthetic
- Faster recovery period
 - return to work within days



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- Non ionizing radiation
 - procedure can be repeated
 - no damage to ovaries
- Cost-effective
 - decreased hospital stay
 - no blood transfusion required
- No HIV transmission
- Safe, low risk of complication



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Skin appearance after treatment



Comparison of recovery time

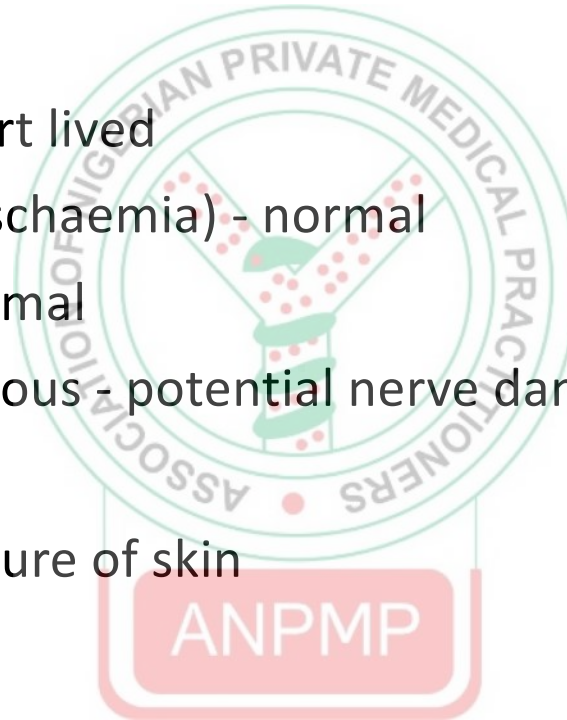


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Possible complications

- Pain
 - transient, mild, short lived
 - at treatment site (ischaemia) - normal
 - back/buttocks - normal
 - pain in legs (dangerous - potential nerve damage)
- Skin toxicity
 - increased temperature of skin
 - blister/burns



- Bowel injury
- Bladder injury
- Endometrial damage
 - Asherman's syndrome
- Nerve injury



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HIFU in Nigeria: The experience so far...

Review

> West Afr J Med. 2022 Feb 28;39(2):204-207.

High Intensity Focused Ultrasound Treatment for Uterine Fibroid in a Nigerian Hospital: A Case Report and Review of Literature

A B Ajayi ¹, V D Ajayi ¹, A Njoku ¹, O Oyetunji ¹, B M Afolabi ^{2, 3}

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PMID: 35279044

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Review of the first 330 clients who had HIFU in Nigeria

Age:

Mean \pm SD = 39.6 \pm 5.0 years

Range = 24 – 53 years

Fibroid only – 289 (87.6%)

Fibroid/adenomyosis – 31 (9.4%)

Adenomyosis only – 10 (3.0%)

MRI nature of fibroids:

Hypointense – 88%

Hyperintense – 5%

Hypointense/hyperintense – 5%

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Number of clients with history of infertility: 167 (50.6%)

Mean age of clients with history of infertility: 40 +/- 5.3 years

Post-HIFU contrast non-perfused volume (NPV): 85.7%

Total number of women with adenomyosis: 41 women

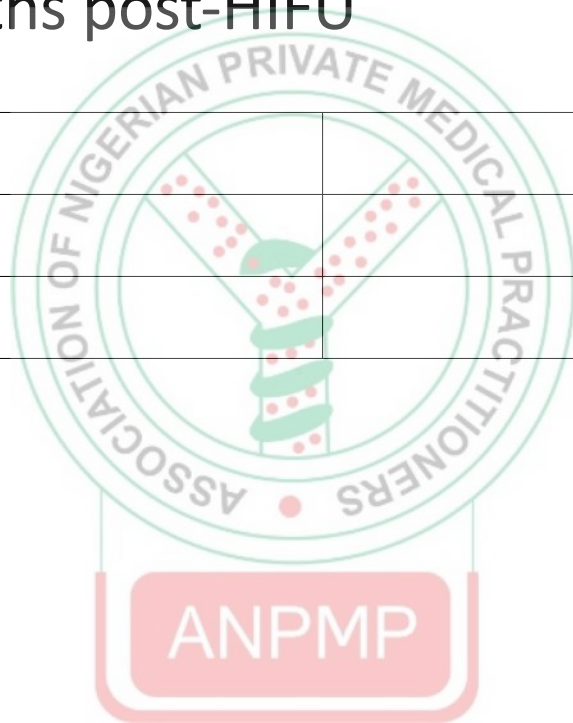
- women with history of open myomectomy: 8 women (19.5%)



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Shrinkage rate (myoma volume) at 3 months, 6 months, 9 months and 12 months post-HIFU



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Intra-/immediate post-HIFU complaints

- **22%** complained of lower abdominal cramps
- **17%** complained of skin burning sensation
- **4%** complained of lower back pain
- **1.6%** complained of transient leg pain



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Delayed complaints

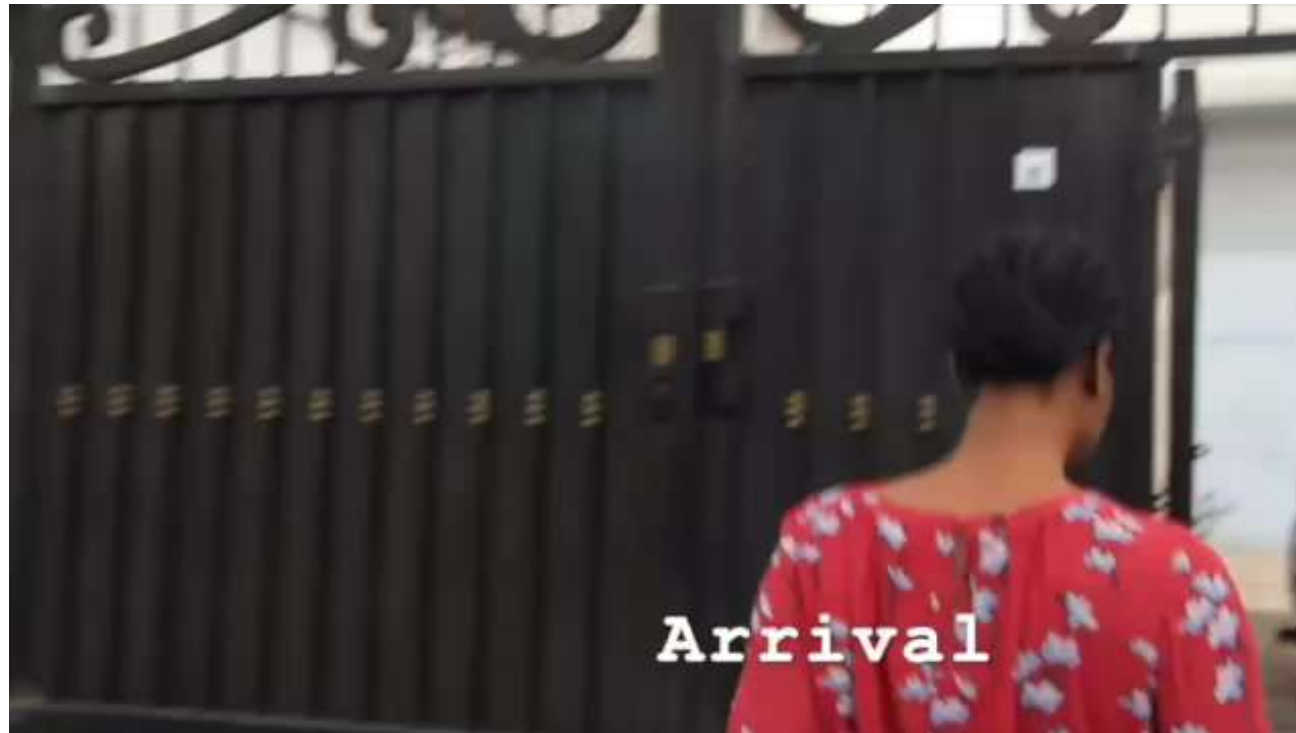
- **18 women (5.6%)** complained of heavy menstrual bleeding
 - **5 women** had HIFU treatment for adenomyosis
 - **13 women** had HIFU treatment for a type 2-4 fibroid
- **A woman** complained of persistent pelvic pain
- **18 women (5.6%)** complained of mild watery vaginal discharge
- **1 client** had mild skin burn



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Testimonial



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Conclusion

HIFU is well suited for our patients with uterine fibroids as majority of the lesions are hypointense and associated with infertility .

The shorter hospital stay, higher pregnancy rate and shorter treatment to pregnancy intervals reported by the ESGE working group on non-surgical therapy in benign disorders of the uterine wall makes HIFU a good option for women with uterine fibroids wishing to preserve their fertility.





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Thank You!



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