



SELF

STUDY OF
ENVIRONMENT,
LIFESTYLE & FIBROIDS

1-877-692-SELF (7353)

www.DetroitSELF.org

Spring 2023

Dear SELF Participant,

I hope you are enjoying the beautiful spring weather.

SELF appreciates your continued effort and participation in this important research. As always, thank you for your dedication.

We are still currently in the 4th Follow-up. A member of the Henry Ford study staff will contact you when it is time to schedule your follow-up 4 activities.

In this newsletter, our health article focuses on some new SELF findings. Along with study updates and reminders, we highlight the Black Girl Magic Museum in Dallas and share tips on managing a successful weight loss plan.

Thank you for being part of SELF.

Sincerely,

Dr. Donna Baird
SELF Principal Investigator

Study Update

- 1365 participants have completed all Follow-up 4 activities to date.
- The Study of Ovarian Aging and Reserve (SOAR) started data collection in October 2019. To date, 218 participants have completed SOAR clinic visits. Enrollment for SOAR has ended. Thank you for your participation.

Reminders

- We will continue to share SELF findings and regular study update mailings (three times per year). Please call us at 1-877-692-SELF (7353) or send an email to info@DetroitSELF.org if your contact information changes, so that you will not miss these important updates.
- Let us know if any contact information changes for **your secondary contacts**.
- If you live out-of-state and will be in the Detroit area, please reach out to us as soon as you have your dates, so that we can schedule you for a SELF visit. *To thank you for your continued participation and time completing this visit, you will receive a \$150 gift card.*

Any Questions?

Call us at

1-877-692-SELF (7353)

or send an email to

questions@DetroitSELF.org



Newsletter Suggestions

We want to hear from you! What would you like to see in future SELF newsletters? Submit your ideas and suggestions to info@DetroitSELF.org.

New Findings from SELF

Family History and Fibroid Development



Many conditions, such as breast cancer, have been shown to be more common for those with a family history of the disease. The data are not so clear for fibroids. The few prior studies that have been done report mixed findings. For example, a study of over 1000 African-Americans and Whites asked participants about their mother's fibroid history and then conducted ultrasound exams to confirm a prior fibroid diagnosis or identify undiagnosed fibroids. They found evidence of elevated risk among those reporting that their moms had been diagnosed with fibroids. However, the subset of participants who had been diagnosed with fibroids before they joined the study accounted for most of the elevation in risk. Further investigation suggested that participants often didn't find out about their mother's fibroid history until they themselves were diagnosed (women tended not to talk about their gynecologic conditions back in the 1990s when the study was conducted). The observed link between mother and daughter having fibroids was a reporting issue, not good evidence of a true increase in risk with family history. SELF provides an opportunity to address this question with more detailed data.

Many of you will remember that at the beginning of SELF those of you who were able to interview your mothers about your

prenatal and early-life also asked them about their fibroid history, including age of diagnosis. About 90% of you were able to interview your mothers. Others provided the data based on information from other family members or friends.

Our findings from your data suggest that there is some increased risk if your mother had been diagnosed with fibroids – about a 2-fold higher risk. However, the risk increase was limited to those whose mom had been diagnosed before age 35. If your mom's fibroids were diagnosed later, there was no measurable increase in risk. Thus, it appears that early onset of fibroids signifies a risk that may be passed on to daughters.

Family history is not just about genetics. There are many social and environmental aspects of life that get passed down across generations. One example is dietary preferences, such as milk-drinking and dairy intake. In 2010 the Black Women's Health Study researchers reported that participants who had more dairy intake were less likely to report being diagnosed with fibroids. We are currently examining dairy intake in SELF and our preliminary findings also suggest reduced risk of fibroids for those with more dairy intake. Like many health conditions, development of fibroids may have genetic influences, but environmental factors are important. The SELF team is working to better understand fibroid development and identify modifiable factors that could reduce risk.

References

- Saldana TM, Moshesh M, Baird DD. Self-reported family history of leiomyoma: not a reliable marker of high risk. *Ann Epidemiol.* 2013 May;23(5):286-90.
- Langton CR. Family history as a risk factor for uterine fibroids: Study of Environment, Lifestyle & Fibroids, in preparation.
- Wise LA, Radin RG, Palmer JR, Kumanyika SK, Rosenberg L. A prospective study of dairy intake and risk of uterine leiomyomata. *Am J Epidemiol.* 2010 Jan 15;171(2):221-32.

Health In The News!

The Seven Components of a Successful Weight Loss Plan

New diet plans and exercise programs pop up every day. How do you know which one to pick? For your best chance at success, look for a program that includes these seven components.

1. *Reasonable weight loss expectations.* Avoid the weight loss equivalents of “get rich quick” schemes. Instead, look for programs that have you aim for about a pound per week of weight loss.
2. *A diet that fits with your preferences.* Most important is choosing a program that has a diet that you enjoy! Do you like vegetables? If so, maybe a vegetarian diet will work for you. Are you able to not eat over long periods of time without getting “hangry”? If so, intermittent fasting might be worth a try. The program should focus on dietary changes that you can stick with long-term. Enjoying what you eat is really important.
3. *Keeping your favorite foods.* Cutting out your favorite foods completely may lead you to give up on weight loss entirely. Instead, try having a smaller serving or substituting a lower-calorie option.
4. *Focus on changing both eating and activity patterns.* Weight loss is primarily driven by dietary changes. Exercise is a major driver of weight maintenance. Being active can help prevent you from regaining weight once you’ve lost it. choose a program that has you getting into the swing of both diet and exercise at the start.
5. *Tracking your weight.* Tracking allows you to see what strategies are working to help you lose weight and what strategies are not.
6. *Tracking your diet.* Track your diet to know where you can trim calories with the least amount of pain.
7. *Accountability and support over the long-term.* Finally, the program you choose should provide the type of accountability and support that you need. In-person and phone-based programs tend to lead to larger weight losses than online programs because they have quite a bit of accountability and support. Web-based and smartphone programs can be helpful for those with challenging or unpredictable schedules. Bottom line, be sure to look for programs that continue to provide accountability and support over the long-term!



Although there is no perfect plan for weight loss, find one that works with your lifestyle and allows for minor slips. Keep these seven key components in mind when selecting a program to help meet your long term goals.

sbm.org/healthy-living/the-7-components-of-a-successful-weight-loss-plan

Black Girl Magic Museum



Are you, your girlfriends, daughters, sisters, mothers looking for girls trip? The Black Girl Magic Museum located in Dallas, Texas is an interactive cultural experience to enlighten, empower, and educate the community on black women’s current and historical impact through magical exhibits. Visit the website to learn more about *The Black Girl Mindset Movement*, *It’s My Melanin*, *Ladies of Black Wall Street* and to plan your visit.

www.blackgirlmagicmuseum.com



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Are masks still required for clinic visits?

Masks are no longer mandatory for clinic visits. However, participants may still wear one if they choose.

LET'S STAY IN TOUCH!

Please call us at **1-877-692-SELF (7353)**

if your phone numbers, mailing address or email address changes.



National Institute of
Environmental Health Sciences



RECOVERY.GOV



What SELF Participants are saying...

- » Debbie is very good throughout the entire visit.
- » Very professional.
- » It was a good experience overall!

Thanks for the kudos!