

**AAGL Minimally Invasive Treatments for  
Pelvic Health Conditions  
Awareness and Attitudes Study  
June 2008**

**— Summary Report—**

**Women Aged 18 and older**

- This study was conducted by Russell Research via the Internet among women aged 18 and older. A total of 526 women participated in this web-based survey between March 30 and June 2, 2008.
- Because this is a sample and not an actual population, an associated margin of error applies. At the 95% level of confidence, the margin of error for this sample is 526 +/- 4.4%.

**Q1 - One out of every two women report they have a pelvic health condition**

- Overall, 51 percent of women surveyed, have experienced one or more pelvic health conditions – stress urinary incontinence (SUI), menorrhagia or heavy menstrual bleeding, fibroids or pelvic organ prolapse.
- Women 35 to 54 years old are more likely to report a pelvic health condition than younger women.

**Q2 - Women believe that the half of them will experience one or more pelvic health conditions in their lifetime (40%)**

- Women who have experienced a pelvic health condition are more likely to say the chance of it happening to any woman is higher vs. those who have not.
- Younger women, 18 – 34 years old are more likely to report the prevalence is only one in four.

**Q3 - Women are not well informed about total abdominal hysterectomy (TAH), the most common type of hysterectomy performed each year**

- Only two out of every ten women know that 600,000 hysterectomies are performed each year
- Just eleven percent of women know that the most common type of hysterectomy performed is TAH
- About one-third of women are aware that TAH is associated with a 4- to 6-inch scar and a 3- to 6-day hospitalization
- Just over 40% percent of women know that TAH has a long and painful recovery

- Forty-nine percent of the women surveyed are aware of less invasive types of hysterectomy

**Q5 - Knowledge about less invasive treatments for pelvic health conditions is low**

- Fewer than 40 percent of women know that the total number of hysterectomies could be greatly reduced with the adoption of newer, less invasive treatments.
- Only twenty-one percent of women know that there are effective office-based alternatives to hysterectomy for treating heavy menstrual bleeding.
- Just nineteen percent of women are aware that they can undergo sterilization in the doctor's office.

**Q4 - Women are in the dark about specific minimally invasive treatments to treat pelvic health conditions even if they experience one of them**

- Over 40 percent have never heard of common minimally invasive procedures to treat SUI, heavy menstrual bleeding or fibroids
- Even among women who have experienced a pelvic health condition their knowledge about less invasive approaches to treat their specific condition was surprisingly low.
  - For women with heavy menstrual bleeding or fibroids...
    - less than half know about endometrial ablation;
    - just over half are aware of laparoscopic supracervical hysterectomy (LSH), the least invasive type of hysterectomy.
  - Only forty-five percent of women with fibroids know about myomectomy
  - About one-third of women with SUI have heard of sling procedures

**Q6 - Women expect OB/GYN's to inform them about minimally invasive treatment options, even if the doctor doesn't offer them (98%)**

- This was true of all women surveyed regardless of whether they had experienced a pelvic health condition or not.

**Q7 - Women expect OB/GYNs to be offering them options with the least amount of pain and disruption to their lifestyle**

- Ninety eight percent of women expect their OB/GYN to offer them options to treat their condition with the least amount of pain.
- According to ninety-four percent, OB/GYNs should also be offering options that consider how the length of recovery will affect their lifestyle, such as lost wages or additional childcare costs.

**Q8 - Women say they should be proactive and ask for minimally invasive procedures as well as seeking out doctors who perform them**

- Ninety-seven percent agree that women should be asking for alternatives to hysterectomy as well as less invasive types of hysterectomy.
- An almost equal number of women say women should proactively find doctors who offer these procedures (96%).

**Q9 - Almost all women say that they are likely to seek a second opinion if their doctor doesn't offer minimally invasive procedures (90%)**

- This is particularly true among women who...
  - suffer from a pelvic health condition;
  - expect doctors to keep them informed and offer treatments with the least pain and least disruption to their lifestyle;
  - agree that women should be proactive and ask for minimally invasive treatments;

**Q10 - Most women would either go to their doctor (43%) or the Internet (42%) to learn more about minimally invasive gynecologic procedures**

- Women who cite the Internet as their first source of information about gynecologic minimally invasive procedures are extremely likely to seek a second opinion if their doctor does not offer them.