Fibroid Fighters Group Honors New York Politician

Congresswoman Yvette Clarke was recognized by the Fibroid Fighters for her support of uterine fibroid legislation.

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The Stephanie Tubbs Jones Uterine Fibroid Research and Education Act of 2021 will increase funding for uterine fibroid research and raise awareness of the disproportionate impact of uterine fibroids on women of color. Congresswoman Yvette Clarke, one of the bill's cosponsors, introduced the legislation that earmarks $150 million to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for these investigations. Now, the politician's advocacy effort is being acknowledged with an accolade, according to a press release from the Fibroid Fighters.

Clarke is the first recipient of the Fibroid Fighters Champion of the Year award, which was presented to her by Yan Katsnelson, MD, the founder and CEO of Fibroid Fighters Foundation. "Recognition of her ongoing support of needed legislation to improve women's health care outcomes for fibroid treatment is long overdue," said Katsnelson.

The usually noncancerous growths in the uterus affect about 20% to 80% of women by the time they reach age 50, and African-American women are three times more likely to develop uterine fibroids than Caucasian women.

The tumors are the primary reason for hysterectomy, accounting for up to 44% of the almost 600,000 procedures performed each year, according to the NIH. (The procedure entails the removal of a woman's uterus, ending her ability to bear children.)

Katsnelson believes more doctors ought to be aware of nonsurgical treatment options for fibroids. "Fibroids can be quite devastating, especially for younger women. It's astonishing the lack of knowledge that exists about these noncancerous tumors," he says. "Even more [amazing] is the number of women who undergo hysterectomies for this condition. Women need to know they have viable options, such as uterine fibroid embolization (UFE), to preserve their fertility."

UFE shrinks fibroids by blocking blood flow to the tumors.

"This disease has ravaged the lives of women—particularly in the Black community—across the

country, and increasing funding for research and public education related to fibroids is critical to reversing this devastating trend," Clarke said in a press release issued by her office. "HR 2007, The Stephanie Tubbs Jones Uterine Fibroid Research and Education Act of 2021, is an important first step towards making women's health care a priority by addressing uterine fibroids."

To learn more about uterine fibroids read "Uterine Fibroids Symptoms," "An Ob-Gyn Talks Uterine Fibroids" and "Understanding Uterine Fibroids."

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