

A Philanthropic Uterine Fibroids Embolization Program

Interventional Radiologists in Brazil run a Uterine Fibroids Embolization philanthropic program addressed to underserved women. For the first time ever they are using a Mobile Interventional Radiology Unit that once a week visits a public hospital in Sao Paulo metropolitan area.

Uterine fibroids embolization (UFE) has shown to be a safe and effective procedure for treating women with symptomatic fibroids. This procedure represents one of the most advanced technologies applied on the last years for women health care.

People in Brazil are mostly dependant of the public health system where the technological resources are limited. There are almost 19 million of people living in Sao Paulo metropolitan area and 65% of them depend on the public health system. Among this population there are almost 1million of women with symptomatic fibroid who need treatment and the vast majority of them are submitted to hysterectomy as main form of treatment.

Concerned with this landscape Interventional Radiologists at Albert Einstein Israeli Hospital in Sao Paulo city decided to promote a charity campaign to offer UFE for low-income women who have no insurance coverage or financial resources to afford the procedure privately.

As they were unable to bring these patients to the private hospital they decided to take the technology directly to them. For this purpose they conceived the concept of a Mobile Interventional Radiology Unite named "ANGIOMOVEL" which basically consists of a small truck for transporting a mobile C arm, a radiological table, protection aprons and a small trolley containing all the specific supplies needed for performing angiography and UFE (5F sheaths, regular 5F catheters, micro catheters, wire guides, embolic agents, contrast medium, etc.). The ANGIOMOVEL team consists of two interventional radiologists, one nurse, one driver and one assistant. Both radiologist, Nestor Kisilevzky, MD and Henrique Elkis, MD charge no fee for this activity. They donate one of their working days weekly to help needed people.

Agreements and treatment privileges were developed within four public hospitals located in the Sao Paulo metropolitan area. Each hospital is visited weekly by the ANGIOMOVEL team. The gynecologists within each of the respected hospitals received UFE specific training prior to the program implementation. The training consisted of UFE patient selection, technical considerations and post-procedure care and outcomes. Patient inclusion is contingent upon several factors; evaluation by a trained gynecologist, completion of a pelvic ultrasound or MRI, routine serological laboratory tests and completion of the SF-36 QOL questionnaire. Each hospital visited by the ANGIOMOVEL provided an empty operative room whereby the supplies transported by the truck are positioned and the UFE procedure suite is temporary built. A several number of UFE procedures are performed during each hospital visit. After finishing the last UFE procedure of the day all the supplies are placed back to the truck and the unit returns to Albert Einstein Hospital.

This program is sponsored by Albert Einstein Social Responsibility Institute which is the philanthropic arm of Albert Einstein Israeli Hospital and a slogan for this campaign was created which is: "Providing Medical Technology with Social Responsibility". The program started at the end of October 2008 and in the first nine weeks more than 40 patients were already treated with complete success.

The initial results of this program indicate that using a Mobile Interventional Radiology Unit is feasible and useful for developing a successful UFE program providing care to the underserved patient community.

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Photos of the ANGIOMOVEL project:





Nestor Kisilevzky, MD (*left*) and Henrique Elkis, MD (*right*)

Other Sources:

Suggestions From Post UAE Patients

<http://www.hopeforfibroids.org/patientsuggestions.html>

UAE Brochure

<http://www.hopeforfibroids.org/UAE.htm>

Uterine Fibroid Embolization information at web site URL: www.ask4ufe.com

Ask4Tell4 Uterine Fibroids Campaign: www.ask4tell4.com

Courtesy of Nestor Kisilevzky, MD and Hope For Fibroids Org. www.hopeforfibroids.org.