Prostate Specialists Deliver Capitol Hill Briefing on Innovative PAE Procedure to Improve Men’s Health

An interventional radiologist and a urologist with UHealth – University of Miami Health System and the Miller School of Medicine highlighted an innovative procedure to treat enlarged prostate glands at a June 5 Capitol Hill briefing on men’s health.

Bruce Kava, M.D., and Shivank Bhatia, M.D., highlighted the innovative PAE procedure at a Capitol Hill briefing on men’s health.

The briefing was organized by the Society of Interventional Radiology and Rep. Donald Payne Jr. (D-N.J.), chair of the Congressional Men’s Health Caucus, to raise awareness of prostate artery embolization (PAE), a leading-edge treatment for benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), and to support the designation of June 12-18, 2023, as National Men’s Health Week.

“It is an honor to share our years of experience with a minimally invasive procedure called prostate artery embolization that helps men enjoy long-term health benefits and a higher quality of life,” said Shivank Bhatia, M.D., chair of interventional radiology at UHealth. “We take a
collaborative approach with our urology colleagues to managing this condition, which affects nearly 70% of men over age 60.”

Dr. Bhatia, who is also professor of interventional radiology and urology, explained that PAE is an outpatient procedure that delivers small micro-sized particles directly to the prostate to cut off its blood flow.

“The prostate shrinkage starts in a couple of weeks and no surrounding organs are affected,” he said. “PAE is effective for large prostates with no size limit. PAE helps relieve symptoms, improves urinary flow and bladder emptying without compromising sexual function. The prostate gland declines in the size by 30% over a three-month period after PAE.”

Minimally Invasive Approaches to Managing BPH

Bruce R. Kava, M.D., professor of urology and director of men's health at the Miller School's Desai Sethi Urology Institute and president-elect of the American Society for Men's Health, kicked off the briefing by outlining the advantages and potential side effects of today’s medical and surgical treatments for BPH.

“Surgery delivers magnificent results, but is not always perfectly suited for individualized patients’ preferences and needs,” he said. “So, clinicians and researchers have looked for minimally invasive approaches to managing BPH. Today we have multiple innovative modalities, including a number of laser procedures, prostatic urethral lift, water vapor thermotherapy and aquablation. These balance the need for excellent voiding results while minimizing sexual side
effects.”

Dr. Bhatia was the lead researcher on the largest long-term North American study on PAE, with 1,000 patients enrolled at UHealth. The results showed that PAE delivered sustained relief for up to six years, from lower urinary tract symptoms or urinary retention due to BPH, in those difficult-to-treat patients with large prostate glands. Patients also reported dramatic improvements in quality of life, with no need for a hospital stay or catheter, and no reported urinary incontinence or sexual dysfunction.

“Our data helps to prove that PAE is a safe, highly effective treatment offering long-term relief of lower urinary tract symptoms,” he said.

At the briefing, South Florida attorney Ron Klein, who was one of Dr. Bhatia’s first PAE patients nine years ago, outlined his experience with the procedure.

“After investigating the options, I saw this was the least invasive treatment,” Klein said. “I had the procedure and went home the same day, with a short recovery time. For me, it’s been nine years and I’ve had no issues with urination since then. So if you need the procedure and qualify for PAE, I highly recommend it.”

The Society of Interventional Radiology is a nonprofit, professional medical society representing more than 8,000
practicing interventional radiology physicians, trainees, students, scientists and clinical associates, dedicated to improving patient care through the limitless potential of image-guided therapies.

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