

One Woman's Story



Angela Kimbrough smiles when she recalls a distressing incident that occurred months ago at a gas pump, but which ended up as the start of a new life.

On this particular day, Angela was standing at her car pumping gas when she felt something trickle down her legs. To her horror, it was bright red streaks of blood! She knew immediately what had happened. For some time she had suffered with uterine fibroids and the exceptionally heavy periods that accompany this condition. Angela knew what it was like to cancel appointments, take time off work, or plan activities according to her cycle. She thought she had things

handled on this day, but the unexpected was always a possibility. In tears, she jumped into her car—by now, drenching the leather seats.

“I knew then how badly I needed help,” says Angela. “This was affecting my life so much that I was actually becoming depressed.”

Angela had determined that she did not want a hysterectomy, so she was searching out her options when she heard about a seminar on Uterine Fibroid Embolization (UFE), a non-surgical procedure for the treatment of uterine fibroids. The seminar was presented by John Lipman, M.D., F.S.I.R., a nationally recognized fibroid expert and physician at Emory-Adventist Hospital at Smyrna with the largest UFE experience in the Southeast. After meeting with Dr. Lipman, Angela knew UFE was her answer. She scheduled the procedure, and now, a year later, she says it's one of the best things she has ever done for herself.

“Having UFE was truly a life-changing experience for me,” says Angela. “Not only do I feel great, but I have also lost weight so I *look* great too! I can now live a normal life.”

What Are Fibroids?

Uterine fibroids are benign (non-cancerous) growths that develop in the muscular wall of the uterus. They are a common occurrence for women of childbearing age, growing during pregnancy, and ceasing to be a problem after menopause because of the lack of estrogen. One in every three women of childbearing age and up to 75 percent of African-American women have fibroids.

Symptoms

Angela's story is all too common. Many women are “silent sufferers” who endure symptoms for years. Dr. Lipman states, “The most common symptoms of uterine fibroids are heavy menstrual bleeding, pelvic pain during menses, and the need to urinate frequently.”

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) can confirm the presence, size, and location of uterine fibroids. Although women with no symptoms do not require treatment, when symptoms are present, they can be quite disabling and can interfere with every aspect of a woman's life.

“Excessive bleeding caused by fibroids may lead to anemia, significant migraines, heart palpitations, lightheadedness, fatigue, and lethargy,” says Dr. Lipman. “Women should explore their options for treatment without delay if their symptoms are significant.”



Treatment—The Better Choice

Proven technologies have expanded the options for women with uterine fibroids. UFE is offering women a successful treatment option at a fraction of the recovery time and without the risks of more invasive procedures, such as a hysterectomy.

Similar to the approach for heart catheterization, UFE involves threading a catheter along a guide wire, entering the femoral artery at the top of the leg through a tiny incision. Using X-ray guidance, interventional radiologists steer the catheter to the artery supplying blood to the fibroids. Microspheres are placed in the artery to block the supply of blood, causing the fibroid to die, shrink, and liquefy. UFE is an outpatient procedure, requiring no surgery, no anesthesia, and no long recovery.

“The incision requires no stitches and is covered with a band-aid,” says Dr. Lipman. “I recommend patients take a week off from work, but average recovery is four or five days compared to six to eight weeks for a hysterectomy. Current Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice had this procedure [in 2004] on a Friday morning, and she returned to work as National Security Advisor on Monday morning.”

The procedure’s high success rate and minimally invasive nature has made UFE an outstanding option for the treatment of fibroids.

“Women suffering with fibroids need to know that they can completely avoid surgery,” says Dr. Lipman. “If they are suffering with fibroid symptoms, they should seek out an interventional radiologist with fibroid experience and determine if this is an option for them.”

Take It from Angela. She knows!

“Dr. Lipman was a Godsend,” she says. “I now live an active and healthy life. I actually have my life back.”

Dr. Lipman’s practice, Atlanta Interventional Institute, is located in the Emory Clinic Building, 3903 South Cobb Drive, Suite 230, Smyrna, (on the campus of Emory-Adventist Hospital). He can be reached at (770) 953-2600, or check out his web site at www.atlii.com.



Meet John Lipman, M.D.



John Lipman,
M.D., F.S.I.R.

Medical school: Georgetown University School of Medicine

Radiology residency: Brigham & Women’s Hospital, Harvard Medical School

Cardiovascular and Interventional Radiology fellowship: Yale New Haven Hospital, Yale University School of Medicine

- Nationally recognized fibroid expert and lecturer on uterine fibroid embolization (UFE), including more than 100 invited lectures on UFE
- Dr. Lipman has the largest volume of experience in UFE in the Southeast, as well as one of the largest in the country
- Top Docs in Atlanta area: *Atlanta* magazine
- Currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Medical Association of Atlanta and the Cobb County Medical Society