TuSalud

Latinas, Black Women Less Likely to Get Minimally Invasive Fibroid Surgery

Compared with white women, Latinas and Black women are more likely to have invasive surgeries to remove uterine fibroids.

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Latina and Black women are less likely to have surgery for uterine fibroids, according to a recent study.

Uterine fibroids are noncancerous growths found in the uterus. Treatment becomes necessary when patients experience heavy bleeding or pelvic pain. Surgeries include a myomectomy, which removes only the fibroids, and a hysterectomy, which removes the uterus. Both options can be performed in a minimally invasive way through small incisions in the abdomen or the vagina. When performed in this manner, neither procedure requires an overnight hospital stay.

Published in the Journal of Minimally Invasive Gynecology, the study found that Latina and Black women often had more invasive abdominal surgery, which results in a large abdominal incision and requires a hospital stay.

For the study, researchers examined the records of more than 1,300 women who had had surgery for uterine fibroids within the last few years. They found that while most women had minimally invasive myomectomies or hysterectomies, there were significant differences between races. For example, 57% of Black women and 65% of Latina women underwent minimally invasive surgeries, compared with 81% of white women.

Researchers found that one reason for the disparity may be that compared with white women, Latina and Black women were less likely to see a doctor who specialized in minimally invasive methods.

Black women are particularly impacted by uterine fibroids and are more likely to have several or large fibroids and experience more intense symptoms than white women.

“That’s all the more reason we should be trying to reduce disparities in care,” said Rebecca Schneyer, PhD, an ob-gyn at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, in a Health Day article.

Schneyer emphasized the need for doctors to explain all treatment options to patients. “A lot has

changed in the past 20 years," she said. "More often than not, minimally invasive surgery is an option."

To learn more, read through Tu Salud's Uterine Fibroids Health Basics or search #UterineFibroids where you'll find headlines such as "6 Tips for Talking to Your Doctor About Uterine Fibroids," "Hysterectomy Is Not the Only Option for Women With Uterine Fibroids" and "Have Fibroids? Certain Vitamins May Improve Your Symptoms."

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