

(H. B. 234)

(No. 50)

(Approved August 13, 2005)

AN ACT

To declare and establish May 12, of each year as the “Fibromyalgia Awareness Day.”

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

Throughout the world, May 12 of each year has been declared as Fibromyalgia Awareness Day. Fibromyalgia is a chronic disorder, which causes pain in multiple body parts and general fatigue to persons who suffer from it.

For years, this disorder was known as *fibrositis*, however, since no inflammation was perceived (suffix-itis means inflammation,) this present name has been adopted for the same. The word fibromyalgia means muscular and fiber tissue pain (ligaments and tendons.) The rheumatologist diagnoses fibromyalgia when a determined person experiences changes that coincide with those recently established for its diagnosis by experts. It is believed that these disorder symptoms are caused by a decrease in substances that generally protect human beings from pain.

Fibromyalgia may appear as a sole alteration (primary fibromyalgia) or associated to other disorders (concomitant fibromyalgia.) Fibromyalgia has been recognized by the World Health Organization and its main symptom is pain. The pain caused by fibromyalgia may be described as by those persons who suffer from it burning, discomforting or stressing.

Sometimes muscular spasms may occur. Symptoms frequently vary according to the time of day, level of activity, climatological changes, sleep disturbances, or stress. In addition to pain, fibromyalgia may cause general stiffness mostly in the morning and swelling of hands and feet. Also, an undefined tingling may be felt that mainly affects the hands in a diffused manner.

Another characteristic alteration of fibromyalgia is fatigue, which lasts almost all day. The persons who suffer from fibromyalgia have low tolerance to physical activity. This fact causes that any low intensity exercise may produce pain, which causes inactivity. Consequently, less effort is made, muscle mass is reduced, and the level of tolerance to exercise decreases even more.

Although there is no cure for fibromyalgia, this disorder may be successfully controlled with the adequate treatment, such as anti-inflammatory medication, exercise, physiotherapy, and massages, among others. For this reason, it is deemed necessary and convenient that Puerto Rico join the global current directed to promote the declaration of May 12 as the Fibromyalgia Awareness Day.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.- May 12 of each year is hereby established and declared as Fibromyalgia Awareness Day.

Section 2.- The Governor of Puerto Rico, through a proclamation to the effect, shall exhort the People of Puerto Rico to observe May 12 of each year as the Fibromyalgia Awareness Day.

Section 3.- The Department of Health shall adopt the necessary measures to enforce the purposes of this Act, through the organization and holding of activities to promote the diagnosis and treatment of fibromyalgia.

Section 4.- This Act shall take effect immediately after its approval.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following Act No. 50 (H.B. 234) of the 1st Session of the 15th Legislature of Puerto Rico:

AN ACT to declare and establish May 12, of each year as the “Fibromyalgia Awareness Day,

has been translated from Spanish to English and that the English version is correct.

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, today 24th of October of 2005.

Francisco J. Domenech
Director