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PUBLICATION:	Daily News
DATE:	16-May-2019
COUNTRY:	Egypt
CIRCULATION:	80,000
TITLE :	On World Thalassemia Day
PAGE:	02
ARTICLE TYPE:	Agency-Generated News
REPORTER:	Staff Report
AVE:	32,500

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On World Thalassemia Day

Novartis Pharma stresses its commitment toward developing Thalassemia medications, improving treatment outcome

On the occasion of the World Thalassemia Day on 8 May, the 20th International Conference for Thalassemia was held, with the participation of seven Arab and African countries, in addition to the participation of scholars from England and the United States, in cooperation with Novartis Pharma.

The conference included a number of discussions on Thalassemia, and the most important topics discussed by the conference were how to avoid the disease and modern treatments in addition to gene therapy and broadening the scientific horizons as well as developing policies for the care of Thalassemia patients.

This came with the participation of a group international and local professors and scholars, including Ali Taher, professor of blood diseases and tumours in the Medical Center at the American University in Beirut, O'Henry frimpong, professor of paediatrics at the University of Pennsylvania, and senior scientist and haematology specialist, director

of the Sickle Cell Anaemia Center at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, and Nuemi Roy, Haematology and Gene Therapy specialist at the University of Oxford, London, in addition to others.

Thalassemia is a type of hereditary anaemia because the chances of conceiving a child who has the illness is 25% if both parents have the illness. Unfortunately, carriers in Egypt are 9%, which is one of the highest percentages in the world. Thalassemia's presence in the Middle East ranges between 2-8%, as the cases diagnosed in Egypt and the Middle East are estimated to be in the thousands, according to Amal El Bashlawy, professor of paediatrics and haematology at Aboul Rish University Hospital.

She added that Thalassemia patients need regular blood transfusions to compensate for the lack of

red blood cells due to the disease. This results in increased iron levels in the body after 10-20 blood transfusion operations to maintain acceptable levels of haemoglobin, which would cause more health complications due to the accumulation and increase of iron, which could harm critical body organs such as the heart and the liver.

Sherif Amin, the chairperson of Novartis, said that improving the level of healthcare provided to Thalassemia patients is an integral part of the company's commitment toward patients and health care experts through offering the latest scientific developments, and a new vision of patient treatment to improve results. He pointed out that Novartis does the best it can in the field of scientific research to develop medications and provide more treatment options.



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