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New colorectal cancer treatment launched in Egypt

Bayer Pharmaceuticals announced the launch of a new colorectal cancer drug in Egypt.

"With nearly 4.000 new cases diagnosed every year, colorectal cancer is a leading cause of cancer-related deaths in Egypt resulting in an annual death toll between 1,200 and 1,500 cases. If diagnosed at an advanced stage, chances of recovery from colorectal cancer are minimal, however early detection drives cure rates up to nearly 95%," said Dr. Yasser Abdel Qader, professor of oncology and head of the Oncology Unit at Qasr Al-Aini Hospital.

Colorectal cancer affects men and women almost equally, at a ratio of 55% to 45% respectively. A 2015 study by the American Cancer Society, conducted between 2009 to 2011, showed that men face a 1:21 chance of suffering from the disease while a woman's risk was assessedat 1:22.

"Before talking about treatment, we should emphasise prevention. Colorectal cancer is, to a large extent, preventable and mortality rates are strongly linked to neglecting preemptive colonoscopies, as a result of not being aware of their existence, a reluctance to discuss the issue with a physician, or an unjustified fear of the procedure," said Dr. Abdel Qader. "Treatment begins by defining a clear therapeutic plan tailored to each patient's case. It may include surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, monoclonal antibody therapy, and post-treatment care. Surgery is usually the first step, unless the disease has progressed to an advanced stage leaving palliative care as the only option."

"The launch of Stivarga in Egypt is a breakthrough," said Dr. Heinz-Josef Lenz, the associate director for Adult Oncology and co-leader of the Gastrointestinal Cancers programme at the USC Norris. "This oral drug contains the active substance regorafenib and can be singularly prescribed.