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Stomach cancer medicine available soon

DURING the recent International Gastro-intestinal, Liver and Oncology Conference held in Cairo, an international pharmaceutical company working in Egypt announced the launching of a new medicine for stomach cancer as a second-line of treatment to the current therapy.

Dr Yasser Abdel Kader, a professor of oncology, Cairo University, noted that stomach cancer was still prevalent worldwide, despite a decline in mortality rates due to the disease's decreasing affliction rate. The new drug, he said, had been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the European Medicines Agency (EMA).

Dr Foad Abu Taleb, a professor of oncology, Zagazig University, pointed out that gastric cancer is called a silent killer because diagnosis rates are low and so, therefore, are recovery rates. He noted that stomach cancer affliction rates were very high in Korea, Latin America, Chile and Japan. There were one million new cases in 2012.

Affliction rates in Egypt stood at 1.7 per cent of the population in 2013 but were predicted to reach 2.6 per cent in 2025 and 5.1 per cent in 2050.

Dr Hisham el-Ghazali, a professor of oncology, Ain Shams University, stressed the importance of early detection of gastric cancer. The average survival of patients whose cancer was detected in its early stages was 71 per cent compared to 57 per cent in the second stage of the disease.

Symptoms of gastric cancer are represented in fatigue and feeling bloated after eating even a small amount, indigestion, persistent nausea, heartburn, stomach pains, continuous vomiting and loss appetite.

Dr el-Ghazali noted that two risk factors of the affliction with stomach cancer are a family history of Gastro-oesophageal reflux, known as acid reflux and obesity, in addition to salty food, eating low amounts of vegetables and fruits and infection with helicobacterpylori (microaerophilic bacterium) found usual-



DR SAMIR Shehata, (1st L), Dr Mohamed Abdullah (2nd L), Dr Yasser Abdel Kader (3rd L) and Dr Hisham el-Ghazali during the announcement of a new stomach cancer medicine.

ly in the stomach and smoking as well as family history of gastric cancer.

Dr Mohamed Abdullah, a professor of oncology, Cairo University, said that options for the treatment depend on the stages of development of the disease. Surgical removal of the tumour, he said, was the only treatment for gastric cancer.

"Today marks an important milestone

in the treatment of advanced gastric cancer in Egypt, as patients and health-care professionals now have an approved medicine specifically for second-line treatment of this difficult-to-treat disease," said Okzan Ozogan, the Director-General of the pharmaceutical company, which produced the new stomach cancer medicine.