

3rd MENA Headache Conference highlights migraine challenge and need for better treatment options ^[1]

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- *In collaboration with the Headache Chapter of the Egyptian Society of Neurology, Psychiatry and Neurosurgery, Novartis launches “**Migraine is not just a Headache**” campaign in Egypt*
- *Migraine affects **nearly 1 in 7 people**, women are three times more likely than men to suffer from migraines* ¹
- ***Less than 50%** of patients satisfied with current treatment options* ²

Cairo - October 18, 2018 – During the 3rd MENA Headache Conference taking place in Cairo, October 18th – 20th, Novartis - in collaboration with the Headache Chapter of the Egyptian Society of Neurology, Psychiatry and Neurosurgery (ESNPN) - announced the launch of its “*Migraine is not just a Headache*” campaign. Designed to raise awareness of the challenges facing migraine patients, the initiative brought together the region’s foremost medical experts from Egypt and other MENA countries to define how healthcare providers and the community can help improve patients’ quality of life.

Dr. Mohamed Osama Abdelghany, Chairman of the Egyptian Headache Chapter and Professor of Neurology at Ain Shams University said, “Migraine is a neurological disease with incapacitating neurological symptoms. It is the third most common disease in the world with an estimated global prevalence of 14.7% - affecting nearly 1 in 7 people.¹ Migraine typically presents as a severe throbbing recurring pain, usually on one side of the head and is often accompanied by debilitating symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, dizziness, extreme sensitivity to sound, light, touch and smell. ³ Though migraine causes aren’t understood, genetics and environmental factors appear to play a role.”⁴

“The impact of migraine on patients’ lives is tremendous and under-recognized,” said **Dr. Maged AbdelNasser, Professor of Neurology at Cairo University and General Secretary of the ESNPN**, “Migraine is globally ranked as the sixth most disabling disease ⁶ – more than 90% of sufferers are unable to work or function normally, and are more prone to anxiety and depression⁷. Ultimately, the huge impact of migraine on patients’ lives translates into significant economic and social burdens.”⁸

He revealed findings from a survey undertaken in Fayoum, Egypt with nearly 2600 participants, “the prevalence of episodic migraine was 17.3%, which peaked in midlife, yet more than 60% of participants did not seek medical advice for headache problems. The absence of specialized headache centers, underestimating “headache” disorders by family members and even by healthcare practitioners, insufficient patient education and the availability of OTC pain relievers, worsen the issue of headache under-recognition and under-treatment.”⁹

Commenting on the severe lack of awareness about migraine, **Dr. Ramez Reda, Co-Chairman of Egyptian Headache Chapter, Professor of Neurology, Ain Shams University**, said, “The societal ramifications of migraine prevalence are generally overlooked, even by healthcare professionals. Across medical schools all over the world, a minimal amount of hours is dedicated to migraine, despite the fact that severe headaches and migraines are highly prevalent among the younger segment of the population¹⁰. Awareness should be raised in order for healthcare professionals, family members and friends to be able to identify the symptoms of migraine.”

Dr. Ramez emphasized saying “Migraine remains underdiagnosed and undertreated in at least 50% of patients, and less than 50% of migraine patients consult a physician or are satisfied with their current treatment.⁵ There is a clear need for more effective, more reliable treatment.”

Dr. Basyouni Abuseif, Novartis Egypt Country President, shared Novartis’s efforts towards alleviating the burden of migraine, saying, “Novartis has a strong commitment to neuroscience and to bringing innovative treatments to patients suffering from neurological conditions where there is a high, unmet need. We are committed to helping people overcome the challenge of migraine. At Novartis Egypt, we are proud to assist Migraine patients in getting appropriate treatments in addition to providing them with educational and awareness programs about the disease.”

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Novartis Egypt Media Relations

E-mail: eg-corporate.communications@novartis.com [9]

Reem El Adl, Head of Corporate Communications and Patient Advocacy
reem.eladl@novartis.com [10]

Shahista Hussien, Corporate Communications Manager
shahista.hussien@novartis.com [11]

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[10] <mailto:reem.eladl@novartis.com> [11] <mailto:shahista.hussien@novartis.com>