



A Man with a Mission

What are the most recent researches you are working on?

My major concerns in research are oncology and regenerative medicine. I recently published on Carcinoma of the Lung, lung mutations, Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT), post-DVT and various other diseases in Jordan. Also, I have publications in regenerative medicine like skin healing, cornea, retina..etc.

And what are the goals of these research projects?

The goal of these projects is to find cures for diseases which cannot be cured by the normal standard day-to-day methods of medicine. Regenerative medicine can be used in these cases, and can make a difference.

It is always an inspiration to get to talk to people who have been through so much in life, to learn about their past goals and dreams, how they were able to achieve them, and what they did to become who they are today. Dr. Abdullah Awadi Al Abbadi is the perfect example of a person with not only a vast knowledge of medicine, but also an astounding humanitarian vision of life. We conducted an interview with Dr. Abdullah and asked him multiple questions about his career:

What is your Job Title?

I'm a Professor of Medicine in Haematology and Oncology, as well as the Director of the Cell Therapy Centre at the University of Jordan.

What medical school did you attend?

I did my undergraduate degree at the University of Valencia, and completed my studies in 1973. Then I proceeded with my training in the UK at the University of Manchester and finished in 1980.

What influenced your decision to specialize in Haematology & Oncology?

Personally, I find the area of Haematology exciting because it is extremely rich in science. I also think that Medical Oncology is very applicable; there are lots of patients, many new advancements, and I thought since cancer is a disease of aging, it would be something to target in the future.

How is Haematology defined to you?

To me, Haematology is an extremely rich science, with new evolving concepts by the day. I consider it a science which not only looks at theoretical topics but also at something that you can see on a day to day basis.



And were you able to make a difference in some cases?

Yes. In the case of knee cartilage degenerative arthritis, we were able to find that if we use a group of stem cells, along with other regenerative factors, we can actually induce the re-growth of the cartilage without the need for knee joint transplants. Even in the cases which need transplants, we can use this treatment to help relieve arthritis pain.

Did any of your researches have an international impact?

Yes, in our research about skin ulcers in diabetic foot. We were able to test our specific product and discover that it worked remarkably well in cases where no other cure was found.

Are students involved in your research projects? If so, what do they work on?

Most of the time yes, students are involved. Students are usually responsible for collecting data, questionnaires, and sample collections.

You are renowned for your activism against tobacco and smoking; could you explain why you're so interested in this field?

Well, I believe that tobacco use is a major cause of human disease. And unless we handle this issue, we will continue seeing people losing their lives. Therefore I am a strong believer in combating tobacco use. I am an active member in all groups which encourage people to stop the spread of tobacco. I think that any country which doesn't work on stopping tobacco use will fail to effectively improve the health of its society.

Since you are specialized in Oncology, do you believe the rumours that state that in the next few years we may find the ultimate cure for cancer?

I think that we already have a cure in hand for many cancers. I believe that in the next few decades we will be able to increase the number of cancers which we can cure. But sadly, I also believe that there will be a substantial number of cancers which we won't be able to cure in the near future.

What was your motivation in all this?

I view myself as a man with a mission. And my mission is two-fold; firstly to apply the science I know to the health of Jordanians to allow equal benefit compared to any other developed country, and secondly I think I can contribute significantly to human well-being.

What is your future vision for medicine in Jordan and internationally?

I think that the future of medicine must be looked at very carefully. The sub-standard infrastructure of many medical schools nowadays is alarming to me, because they not only produce sub-standard medical practitioners, but also financially driven rather than humane doctors. And I also believe that the face-to-face direct contact between a doctor and his/her patient can't be replaced by technology, as most young generations are attempting to achieve, because the direct communication and examination is the main way doctors can help cure their patients.

Finally, do you have any advice for medical students?

What I would advise all my medical students is to have a mission in life. Determine your mission right from the start. Know what you want to be, and work accordingly. And I would also advise them to stay close to the humane side of medicine, because if we lose this side of being a doctor, we are just ordinary people with nothing to offer.

