A personal quest to prevent blindness [1]

Hope [2]

When Parisa Zamiri was a young girl in Iran, it made her sad to see how her blind grandmother struggled with day-to-day tasks. “I grew up with her touching the stove to see if it was on. And so, she always had burns on her hands,” Zamiri recalls.

That early influence led Zamiri to a career as an ophthalmologist in England. But even working with patients in the eye clinic was frustrating because there was little doctors could do to stave off the inevitable loss of their vision. So Zamiri went back to school for a Ph.D. and became a researcher. Today, she’s a translational medicine expert at the Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research [3]. Translational medicine is the process that moves research from the lab, where the discovery takes place, to the clinic, where investigational treatments are tested in patients. Zamiri designs clinical trials to evaluate potential drugs as safely and efficiently as possible.

Zamiri’s current research focus is dry age-related macular degeneration, a significant cause of blindness in older people worldwide. “I’m hoping that with a better understanding of this disease, we can provide a treatment to at least slow its progression” Zamiri says.

Related Video: Long Live Life [4]

Her work is almost always on her mind. “I go to bed and wake up thinking about the project,” she says.

A new molecule is currently being tested in patients with dry age-related macular degeneration. Once the clinical trial is completed, Zamiri’s efforts won’t stop; she’ll simply switch her focus to the next project.

“The suffering I saw my grandmother go through is a constant fuel and a reminder to me to go faster,” she says.

Links
[1] https://www.novartis.lv/node/11271
[2] https://www.novartis.lv/taxonomy/term/51
[3] http://www.nibr.com/
[4] https://www.novartis.lv/node/4541