

PGDIS CONFERENCE Kuala Lumpur Malaysia



6-8 May 2024

PGT and BEYOND...



PGT-M reproductive testing as a genetic disease prevention program

Dr Karolina Kobus





Rare Genetic Diseases – Global Perspective

Epidemiology

- Around 5 % all live births have genetic disease
- 7 million people are born with genetic disease per year
- 7000 genetic disorders

Challenges for genetic diseases

- Lack of treatment options, 95% no treatment
- Diagnosis delays and misdiagnosis 5-7 years
- 30% of patients will not see their 5th birthday

AJMC

Not So Rare: 300 Million People Worldwide Affected by Rare Diseases



Why Rare Diseases Are Really Not So Rare

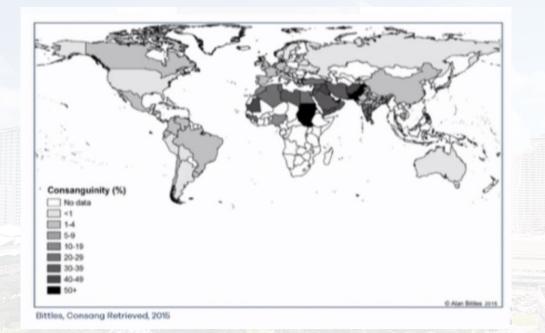
Despite recent advances in treating rare diseases, patients often feel isolated, with a proper diagnosis sometimes hard to come by.







- Middle East community has a **unique tribal structure** that is still preserved over generations. This structure **creates a sort of genetic isolates** that can be significantly used in linking medical conditions with the tribes
- Rapid rate of growth, large family size, consanguineous marriages, and the presence of genetic isolates have greatly impacted the landscape of genetic disorders in the Middle East.



About 20% of the world population prefers consanguineous marriages (Tadmouri et al, 2009) because of their social benefits

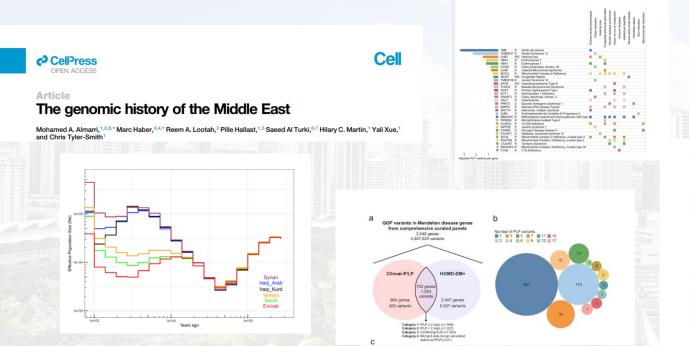






Rare Genetic Diseases – Middle East Perspective

- Gulf region has an increased rate of inherited genetic diseases—nearly double the rate in Europe and the United States.
- Often the diseases have never been seen before and many disorders have been first described in Middle Eastern patients.



6.045 genomes 88.2 million SNVs and indels	ſ	Catalogue of pathogenic variants in Mendelian disease genes Survey and curation of 20 Mendelan gene panels (2.646 overse contairing		(UCOB AP-475, Int 1/23) sideality (Auto 1) (Call 1) Call 1)
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from QBB	Ļ	Genome-wide rare-variant burden analysis Non-synonymous and loss of function variants cenome wide	-	Fiberg for HWE. OQ. A& AO & AF model (SS) unless 11/35

Aamer et al. Genome Medicine (2024) 16:46 https://doi.org/10.1186/s13073-024-01307-6 Genome Medicine

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RESEARCH

Burden of Mendelian disorders in a large Middle Eastern biobank

Waleed Aamer¹⁺, Aljazi Al-Maraghi¹⁺, Najeeb Syed², Geethanjali Devadoss Gandhi¹, Elbay Aliyev¹, Alya A. Al-Kurbi¹, Omayma Al-Saei¹, Muhammad Kohailan¹, Navaneethakrishnan Krishnamoorthy¹, Sasirekha Palaniswamy¹, Khulod Al-Malki¹, Saleha Abbasi¹, Nourhen Agrebi¹, Fatemeh Abbaszadeh³, Ammira S. Al-Shabeeb Akil¹, Ramin Badii³, Tawfeg Ben-Omran^{45,6}, Bernice Lo^{1,7}, The Qatar Genome Program Research Consortium, Younes Mokrab^{1,8,9*} and Khalid A. Fakhro^{1,7,8*}



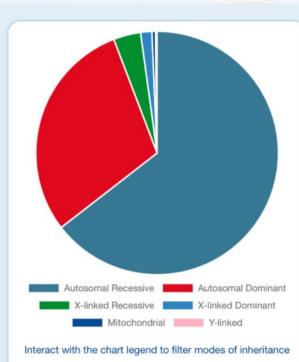


Rare Genetic Diseases – Middle East Perspective

Higher prevalence of recessive genetic disorders Higher birth defects Increased homozygosity

Country	Birth defects per 1,000 live births	First-cousin marriage rate in %					
Sudan	82.0	46.7					
Saudi Arabia	81.3	33.5					
Benin	77.9	na.					
Burkina Faso	77.0	na.					
Occupied Palestenian Territory	76.6	na.					
UAE	75.9	25.2					
Tajikistan	75.2	n.a.					
Iraq	75.2	32.3					
Kuwait	74.9	24.3					
Afghanistan	74.9	n.a.					
USA	47.8	n.a.					
Germany	43.8	n.a.					

The diagnostic strategies should be tailored to the needs of local population and be compatible with the cultural traditions and social make up and the legal system of the region. Example: Osteogenesis Imperfecta Caucasian: Dominant Middle Eastern: Recessive



DISTRIBUTION OF THE MODES OF INHERITANCE OF GENETIC DISORDERS IN THE ARAB WORLD







Non-Communicable Diseases – Middle East perspective

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the global population aged 60 years and above is expected to double by 2050, and triple by 2100.



KEY POINTS

- Cardiovascular disease, cancer and obesity represent up to one third of disease burden in the MENA region.
- In Saudi Arabia, NCD prevalence is 32,15% responsible for 73% of all deaths.
- **Obesity** prevalence **41% in males** and **78% in females**.
- Diabetes prevalence 18,3%.
- Our last 10 years is lived in poor health poor span

High prevalence of Diabetes, Cardiovascular and metabolic diseases. 9.4% of the population in US has Diabetes. The situation in the Middle East is almost double this number.

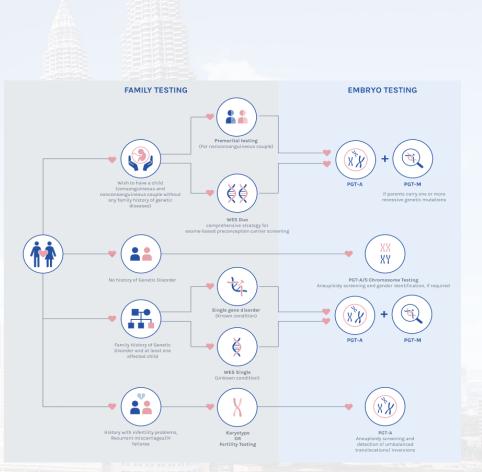


Infertility – Middle East perspective

Key Factors

- Obesity, Smoking, Longer reproductive cycle
- Higher maternal age
- Low Fertility rates in the population (3.2 in early 2000's to 1.7-2.3 in 2015)
- Social pressures to have a baby
- Consanguinity about 50% or higher in the GCC
- Local factors. The association between lower fertility, parental consanguinity, obesity, and vitamin D deficiency was already described.

Infertility is worldwide acknowledged as a major health problem. The prevalence of infertility in women of reproductive age has been estimated to be **one in every seven couples** in the **western world** and **one in every four couples in developing countries**



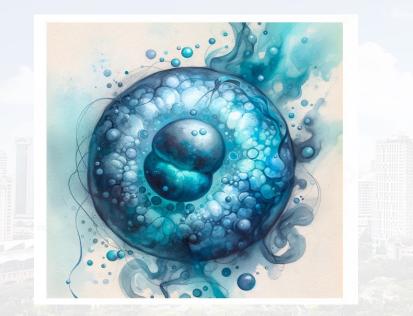






Health Economics – Middle East Perspective

RISING HEALTHCARE COST AND CHRONIC DISEASES PUT CONSTANT PRESSURE ON PAYERS WITH INCREASED EXPENDITURE AND LIMITED RESOURCES:



Constrained healthcare budgets:

- Increasing population
- Competitive environment
- Increasing prevalence of chronic diseases
- Increasing cost of treatment
- Lunch of high cost innovative drugs
- Higher Prevalence of rare genetic disorders in the Middle East
 than in Western Countries
- Poor awareness about personalized genomics testing
- Lack of tailored screening and preventive strategies





Genomics of disease risk in globally diverse populations

Global differences in the prevalence and distribution of diseases and their risk factors are a complex phenomenon determined by population history, adaptive evolution, environmental, social, demographic, cultural and genetic factors.

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Understanding global genetic diversity and its impact on human health and disease has the potential to provide additional insights into the biological mechanisms underlying disease risk

Population	Characteristic	Opportunities
Genetically diverse populations (for example, African populations)	High levels of genetic variation among individuals in the population	Novel discovery of loci associated with traits relative to less diverse populations — for example, population-specific variants, variants common in these populations but rare in other well-studied populations
Population isolates, founder populations (for example, Amish populations, Greek isolates)	Low effective population size, relative genetic homogeneity, enrichment for some rare deleterious variants	Novel discovery among loci that have increased to high frequencies in these populations but are rare in most other global populations
Populations with high levels of consanguinity (for example, Middle-Eastern populations)	High levels of homozygosity	Assessment of pathogenic potential of rare variants in homozygous form and gene function by assessment of naturally occurring gene knockouts
Admixed populations (for example, African-Americans)	Genomes of individuals are a mosaic of haplotypes of different ancestral origin	Assessment of the association between local ancestry with disease (where disease susceptibility is known to vary among source populations). Cases with disease will be enriched for specific ancestry at loci associated with disease
Populations exposed to different environmental stimuli (for example, sub-Saharan African populations exposed to malaria)	Genetic adaptation in response to environment stimulus	Adaptation, including selective sweeps or balancing selection leading to certain alleles rare or absent in other populations reaching higher frequencies in these populations (for example, the sickle cell variant associated with malaria)
Multi-ethnic cohorts	High levels of differentiation between different ethnic groups studied and different linkage disequilibrium patterns	Better resolution of causal variants associated with traits or diseases
Family-based cohorts	Pedigrees with related individuals (diseased and healthy), with detailed phenotyping for each pedigree	 Assessment of loci associated with Mendelian disease; discovery of de novo mutations associated with disease Assessment of heritability of complex traits, accounting for shared environment

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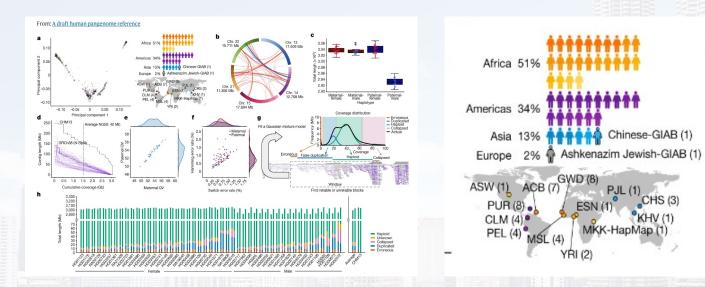
Gurdasani, D., Barroso, I., Zeggini, E. et al. Genomics of disease risk in globally diverse populations. Nat Rev Genet 20, 520–535 (2019).





Lack of proper representation of Arab population in the reference genome

The current reference human genome is nearly 20 years old and mostly derived from a single Caucasian individual.) It suffers from a major limitation: as cannot represent the diversity found in human genomes globally in a single reference sequence.



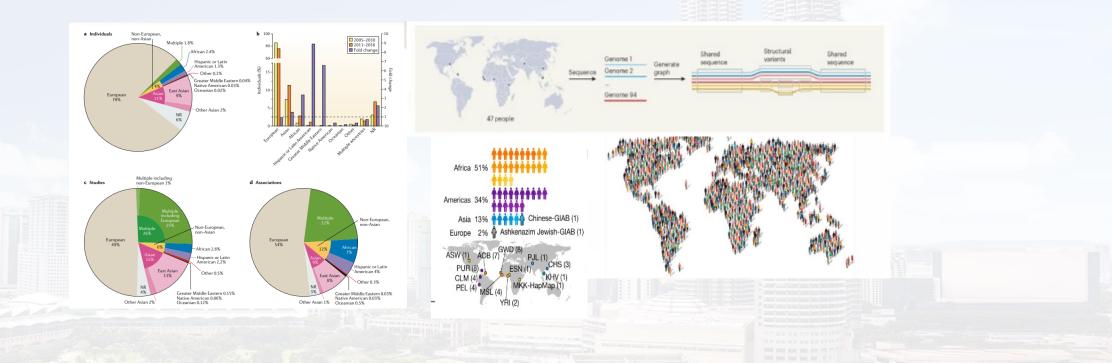
The human pangenome based on 47 individuals representing a wider global genetic <u>diversity</u> has been just published by the Human Pangenome Reference Consortium (HPRC).





Lack of proper representation of Arab population in the reference genome

Unfortunately, **Arab population** is still **underrepresented in the human reference** <u>genome</u>. As a consequence, many of Arab patients are receiving **false positive/negative or inconclusive** reports.

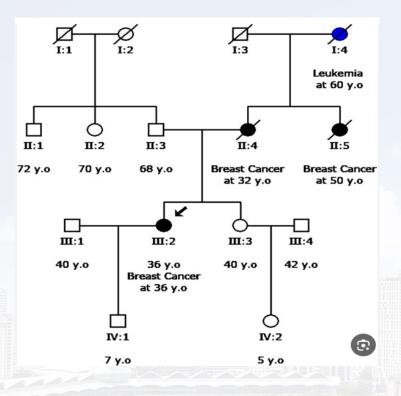






Lack of proper representation of Arab population in the reference genome

Pedigree of a family with strong breast cancer history



~35-67% of cases with GUS or VUS

Positive family history of the disease, but there is NO clear pattern that is consistent with any of the known inherited syndromes

How to solve this dilemma?

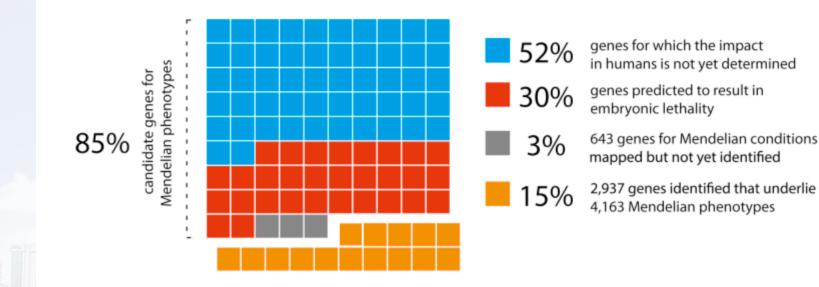
- Segregation studies
- Clinical Exomes
- WGS National Genome Projects (to be able to identify more genomic variants from various populations that can provide insights into health and disease)
- Functional Studies

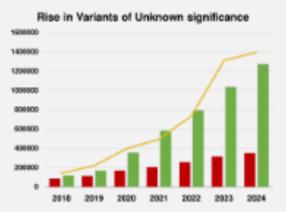




Lack of proper representation of Arab population in the reference genome - GUS and VUS

Humans have approximate 20,000 genes





More than 50% of genes without any known function (GUS)!

VUS constitute ca. **48% of over 2 million variants** in ClinVar and **30-35%** of genetic reports remain inconclusive due to a VUS being the primary finding. Those numbers are much higher for **underrepresented ethnic groups**.

Segregation and functional studies can provide crucial insights to help clarify the pathogenicity of the variant and it's impact in human





Lack of proper representation of Arab population in the reference genome - GUS and VUS

Relationship between **Human Protein Coding Genes** and **Mendelian Phenotypes** requires constant research and development . While treatment decisions should **not be made based on GUS or VUS**, the ACMG recommends follow-up testing, potentially leading to reclassification that could be a key to unlocking a patient diagnosis.





~19,000 protein-coding genes are predicted to exist in the human genome. Variants that cause Mendelian phenotypes have been identified in ~2,937 genes (~15.5%). Genes underlying ~643 Mendelian phenotypes (~3.38%) have been mapped but not yet identified. On the basis of analysis of knockout mouse models, LOF variants in up to ~30% of genes (~5,960) could result in embryonic lethality in humans.

For a minimum of ~52% of genes (~10,330), the impact in humans has not yet been determined. Collectively, ~16,063 genes remain candidates for Mendelian phenotypes.

Discovering the genetic basis of a Mendelian phenotype establishes a link between genotype and phenotype, making possible carrier and population screening and direct diagnosis.

Such discoveries also contribute to **our knowledge of gene function**, **gene regulation**, **development**, **and biological mechanisms** that can be used for **developing new therapeutics**.





Importance of the genomic initiatives in the Middle East

National genomes programs are critical as they will fill this gap and provide a road map of the reference human genome and a landscape of mutations in genomes across many disease types in the Middle Eastern patients.



- This will allow us to classify properly genetic variants. Reduce number of VUS and GUS
- To understand better the molecular mechanism of diseases and the rationale for molecule-guided therapies.
- It will help us to adjust current screening and preventive strategies for the Middle Eastern populations.

Combined in-depth genetic analysis with rich biobank phenotypes to uncover potentially 'novel' disease genes.

We believe this approach will become more common across large-scale biobanks in the future and will have implications for **precision health** and **personalized medicine**





Importance of the genomic initiatives in the Middle East



RESEARCH

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Recent research, utilizing WGS of >6000 Qatari individuals:

- 62.5% of individuals carry at least 1 known disease mutation linked to recessive conditions.
- There are 56 rare diseases which each have a cumulative gene-carrier
 frequency (GCF) of >1/50, exceeding the threshold of what should be screened
 for in newborn and premarital screening programs in Qatar.
- Discovered new genes with high mutational load, including 5 genes with impact on traits relevant to metabolic disorder and type 2 diabetes, consistent with the high prevalence of these conditions in the region.
- Several mutations that are marked in databases as "pathogenic" which appear in homozygous state(!) in seemingly healthy individuals in the Qatar Biobank, prompting their reconsideration as potentially not really disease-causing.

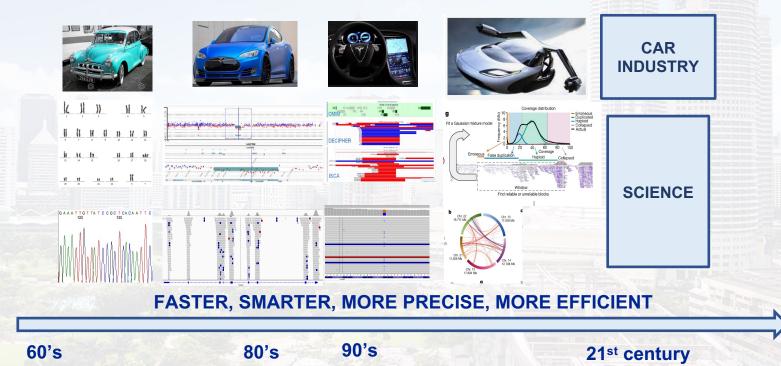




Evolvement of the genomics and personalized medicine

Recent technological advances in NGS:

- significantly improved the diagnostic yield both in rare genetic disorders for which disease genes were unknown and/or genetic testing was not offered
- provided completely new, innovative cell free DNA or single cell diagnostic applications such as NIPT, PGT-A/PGT-M or liquid biopsy testing







For whom?

Couples with **fertility problems**, **recurrent miscarriages**, **unexplained IVF failures** and **affected child** or with a **known family history of a particular genetic diseases**.

With the recent advancements in the use of PGT-M is becoming a significant alternative for many families at risk for whom prenatal diagnosis and termination of pregnancy of an affected fetus is not a religiously, traditionally or culturally acceptable option.

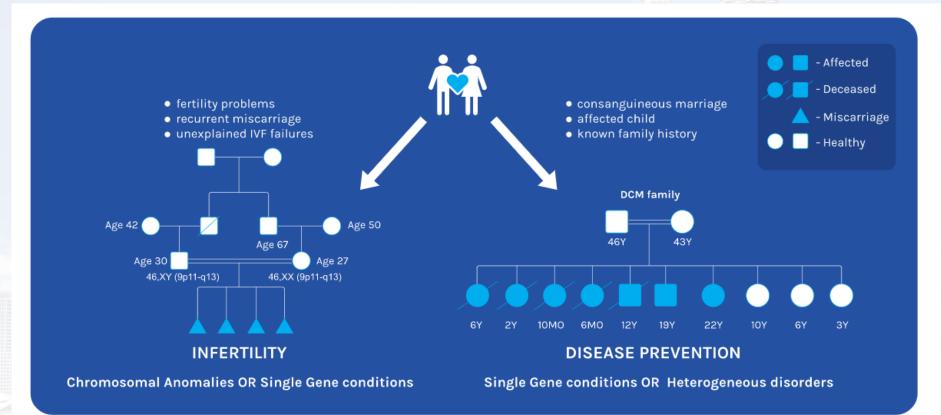
AIM

Promoting Reproductive Genetics as a part of Preventive strategy for the local population in order to reduce/remove genetic disorders from the population









Step 1: Genetic consultation Step 2: Family testing for rare genetic disorders Step 3: PGT-M + PGT-A + linkage testing





The researches **compared** the **cost of the PGT-M intervention** versus the **cost of care for patients with most common single gene defect disease**: sickle cell disease.



They calculated that an average lifetime cost could reach as high as \$1.7 million.

The only cure is **bone marrow transplant**, known as hematopoietic stem cell transplantation, with cost: between **\$150,000** and **\$250,000** per patient.

Even more promising **gene therapies** to treat sickle cell disease are expected to have a price tag of more than **\$1 million**.

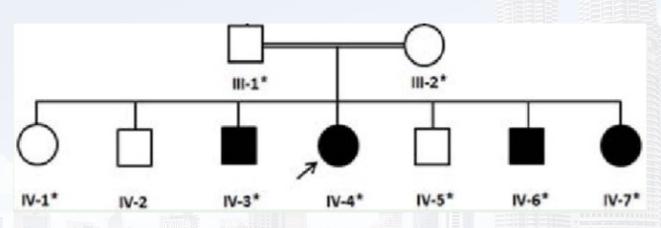
On the other hand, the estimated cost of PGT-M-IVF to prevent the dieses is **\$15,000 to \$25,000**.

So, PGT-M-IVF might improve overall patients' management and reduce the cost paid by local governments for the treatment of inherited diseases.





Family with history of pediatric inherited metabolic disease, characterized by early-onset **diabetes**, **skeletal dysplasia** and **hepatic dysfunction**



- consanguineous marriage
- patient's mean age was 4.6 years (range: 10 months to 17.5 years)
- there was a variation in the phenotype between siblings
- diabetes was the presenting feature in all affected children
- 3 out of 4 children had severe hepatic dysfunction, followed by LIVER TRANSPLANTATION

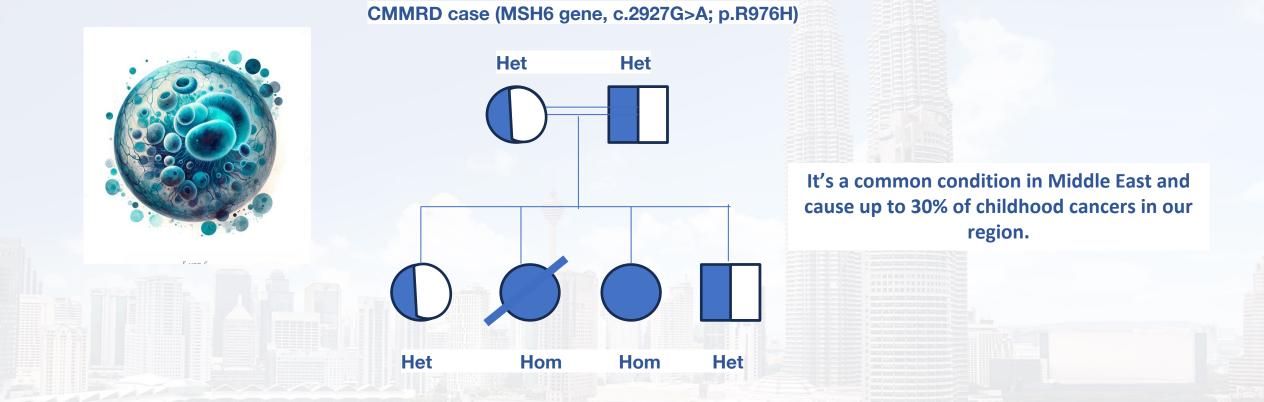




	Lifetime – health management of hepatic dysfunction per patient								
Reproductive genetics IVF + PGTM – health management per couple	Liver transplant – 286 178 AED / surgery Lifetime Immunosuppressant's treatment – 9182 AED / month								
IVF cycle – 20 000 AED / per couple									
IVF related genetic testing – 18 000 AED /couple	Special diet – 1430 AED / month								
An avoidable costs of medical care including unnecessary diagnostic procedures and life-long monthly treatment	Uncertainty for families								
	Emotional drain of dealing with serve genetic disorder								
Total cost 40 000 AED (11 000 USD)	Total cost 296 000 AED (81 000 USD)								
Disease prevention	= Cost savings								



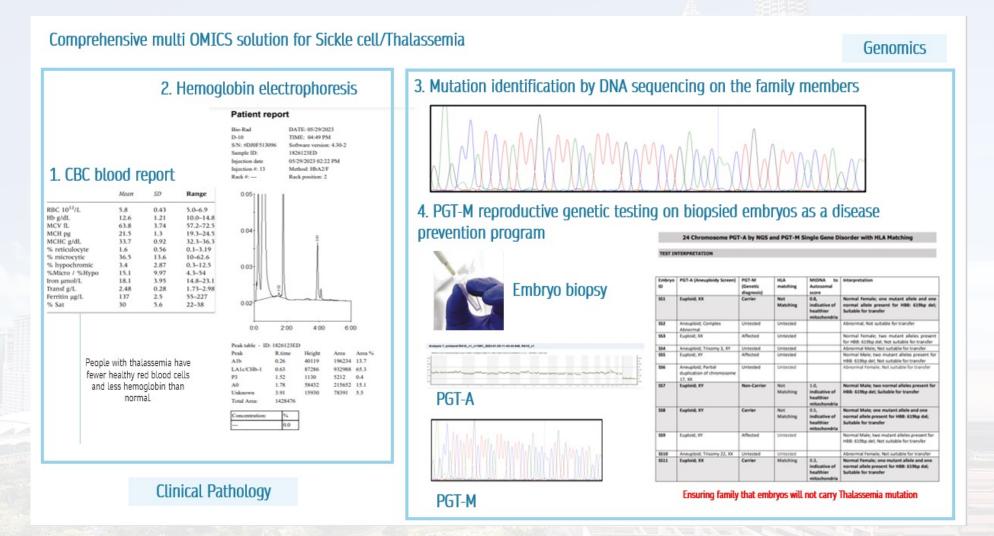




Family with history of Constitutional mismatch repair deficiency (CMMRD) syndrome, they need to be on surveillance because of high risk of different Cancer development. One girl already died at age of 2, because of developed glioblastoma.



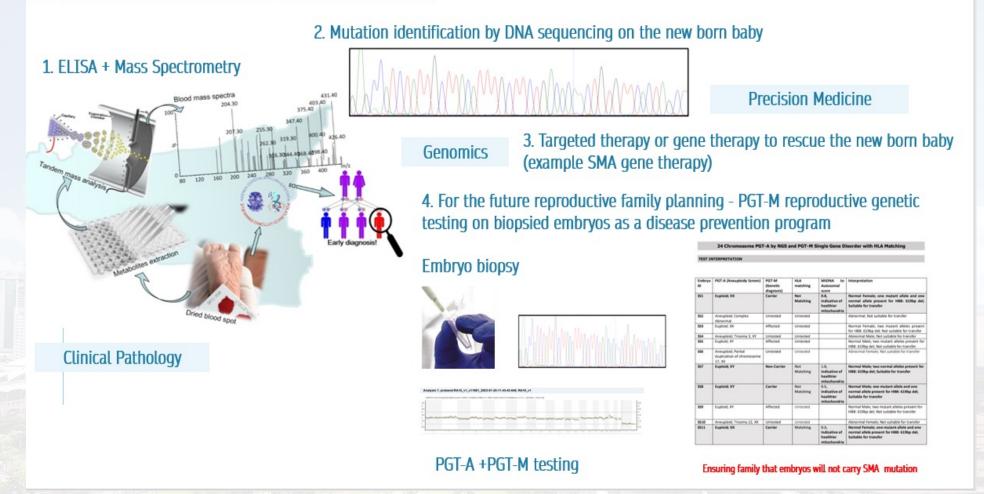








Comprehensive multi OMICS solution for new born screening







Summary:

- Prevalence of rare genetic disorders is much higher in the Middle East than in Western Countries.
- Testing Arab samples in the European or US Laboratories might generate FALSE negative or False Positive results, not mention about data privacy and security.
- Preventive programs must be tailored to the genetic makeup of the local population.
- Genome sequencing of large biobanks from under-represented ancestries provides a valuable information about Mendelian diseases.
- Promote Reproductive Genetics as a part of Preventive strategy in order to reduce/remove genetic disorders from the population with the high rates of consanguinity.





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Precision Medicine and the Future of Genomics Summit 3-5 December 2024, Doha-Qatar







THANK YOU

PGT and BEYOND...





Evolvement of the genomics and personalized medicine

The availability of high advanced PGT-M genetic services locally will not only provide accurate genetic diagnosis, but also might be offered as a disease prevention program.

It will avoid an uncertainty for families, not to mention the economic costs of unnecessary diagnostic procedures.

It will improve patient's management, survival rate and reduce the spent amount and cost paid by local governments for the treatment of chronic diseases for local community.



Preimplantation Genetic Testing for Monogenic Disorders (PGT-M) as an inherited genetic disease prevention program.





Classical Cytogenetics

Improving reproductive health by comprehensive multi OMICS solution



Recurrent miscarriages or IVF failures (approximately 25% of recognized pregnancies end in miscarriage)

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Karyotype of a patient with a balanced reciprocal translocation: 46, XY, t(7;16) (p11;p13).

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PGT-A Reproductive Genetic testing to make sure that baby will be without any chromosomal anomalies