 

Press release

International experts noted the experience of Kazakhstani doctors in the treatment of vitiligo

On June 24, an international conference "Vitiligo: a look into the future" was held in Almaty with the participation of practitioners, researchers and patients from all over the world.

The conference was held within the framework of vitiligo Awareness Month, which was previously announced in June by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The city of Almaty has been chosen as the international headquarters of the 13th World Vitiligo Day (WVD), it is traditionally celebrated in the world on June 25.

Among the participants of the conference are representatives of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Vitiligo Research Foundation, scientists, doctors and international experts from Belgium, Italy, the Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, the USA, as well as patients. The participants of the conference, organized by the Kazakh Scientific Center of Dermatology and Infectious Diseases of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Center for Vitiligo and Skin Health in Almaty, discussed innovations in the treatment of vitiligo in the world and in Kazakhstan, the results of the latest scientific research, exchanged experiences, took part in master classes by international experts.

- I would like to note the experience of Kazakhstani doctors in the treatment of vitiligo. The effectiveness of surgical operations in the segmental form of the disease ranges from 85 to 100 percent. There is a 14-year-old patient in remission," says Jan Valle, Director General of the Vitiligo Research Foundation, professor at the University of Gugliemo Marconi in Rome, author of the international bestseller Guide to Vitiligo.

On the eve of the conference, foreign experts took part in a demonstration operation related to the transplantation of the patient's own healthy skin. Similar operations in the CIS countries are performed only in Almaty and Tashkent. Kazakhstani doctors have had similar experience for 8 years. Today, domestic doctors have already carried out 133 transplants. The breakthrough result was repigmentation (closure of the focus of vitiligo) up to 100% on the face. In recent years, for the first time, it has been possible to achieve 35-40% closure of the lesion on the hands using a surgical method. Now doctors continue to work on improving these results.

Dermatologists of the country have done a lot of work on the introduction of highly effective methods of treating this disease. If in 2010 there was only one Waldman phototherapy unit in Shymkent in Kazakhstan for the treatment of vitiligo, then in 2022 the "gold standard of treatment of the disease" is already being carried out in 13 centers of the country. Phototherapy is used in three republican and 10 regional centers.

Scientific research in the field of vitiligo is also developing dynamically. Kazakh scientists have identified significant genotypes affecting the prognosis of vitiligo, developed a protocol of combined phototherapy, as well as algorithms for managing patients based on genetic testing and with progressive vitiligo.

The goal of the WVD campaign is to help patients overcome prejudices, gain access to modern methods of vitiligo treatment and lead a full life. More than 15 thousand patients have applied to Kazakhstan dermatological institutions with vitiligo problems in a year. This indicator is probably more than 2-3 times higher, since many doctors and patients are not informed about possible methods of treating vitiligo. Many people, due to shyness, public condemnation and stigma, prefer to hide the disease and do not go to doctor's appointments, which is a serious obstacle to treatment. This was discussed at the conference by patients: Lilia Mamieva, brand designer, author of the book "Vitiligo does not scare me", Meruert Kurmet – fashion model, Ruzana Anuarbekova – educational psychologist.

Vitiligo causes lightening of the skin with spots on the face and body. This is an unpredictable, chronic, non-infectious, autoimmune skin disease, which affects every hundredth person to varying degrees. Vitiligo is not fatal and does not cause any organic harm, but sometimes has a devastating effect on the social life of a sick person and his family. The disease can affect anyone at any age, but usually this condition develops before the age of twenty, which means that many children live with vitiligo.

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