A personal quest to prevent blindness

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. 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.

Parisa Zamiri, Translational Medicine Expert at the Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research

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.

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.

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