



2nd MENA Congress for **Neurogenetic Disorders 2025**

17-18 October 2025, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

ORGANIZED BY



MENA Organization for
RARE DISEASES
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2nd MENA Congress for Neurogenetic Disorders 2025

17-18 October 2025, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

A very warm welcome to the **2nd MENA Congress for Neurogenetic Disorders**.

It is with great pleasure that we invite you all to this one-of-a-kind conference in the region in its second edition building on the success of the first conference last year. The 1st MENA Congress for Neurogenetic Disorders 2024 which was held on 15-16 November 2024 in Dubai, UAE, was the first regional conference that is fully dedicated to neurogenetic disorders. The first edition was very successful with 35 speakers, including 7 international experts, and more than 200 participants with more than 30% coming from other countries. Various topics related to neurogenetics were discussed with 95% of attendees giving an above-average evaluation for the presentations.

The 2nd MENA Congress for Neurogenetic Disorders 2025 will take place on 17-18 October 2025 and will include experts, researchers, clinicians, and professionals from across the region and beyond gather here in Dubai to exchange knowledge, discuss advancements, and collaborate in the field of genetically-determined neurological disorders manifesting across the life span. This conference serves as a platform whereby clinical experiences are shared, basics but also emerging trends are tapped into whilst we collaborate towards better outcomes for our patients.

Throughout the event, we will hear from esteemed experts, engage in thought-provoking discussions, and explore innovative approaches to diagnosis, treatment, and management of neurogenetic disorders.

Let's join hands to make a positive impact on the lives of children and adults with neurogenetic disorders and that of their families too.

Dr. Mohamed Babiker

President of MENA Congress for Neurogenetic Disorders 2025
Consultant Pediatric Neurology and Director of Pediatric Neurology Residency Program, Al Jalila Children's Specialty Hospital
Clinical Associate Professor, Mohammed Bin Rashid University of Medicine and Health Sciences, Dubai, UAE



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CONGRESS PRESIDENT



Dr. Mohamed Babiker

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Consultant Pediatric Neurology and Director of Pediatric Neurology
Residency Program, Al Jalila Children's Specialty Hospital
Clinical Associate Professor, Mohammed Bin Rashid University of
Medicine and Health Sciences, Dubai, UAE

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE



Prof. Ayman El-Hattab

Director and Consultant Clinical Genetics, Genetics and Rare Disease
Center, Burjeel Medical City, Abu Dhabi
Professor, College of Medicine, University of Sharjah, Sharjah
Founder and President, MENA Organization for Rare Diseases, UAE



Prof. Brahim Tabarki Melaiki

Consultant Pediatric Neurology, Prince Sultan Military Medical City
Adjunct Professor Pediatric Neurology, Alfaisal University, Riyadh,
Saudi Arabia
Professor of Pediatric Neurology, University of Sousse, Sousse, Tunisia



Prof. Fahad Al Bashiri

Consultant Pediatric Neurology and Epileptology, Department of
Pediatrics, College of Medicine, King Saud University
President, Saudi Pediatric Neurology Society, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



Dr. Haitham Elbashir

Consultant Pediatric Neurorehabilitation, Al Jalila Children's Specialty
Hospital
Clinical Professor of Pediatrics, Mohammed Bin Rashid University of
Medicine and Health Sciences, Dubai, UAE



Dr. Majid Aziz

Consultant Pediatric Neurologist, Sheikh Khalifa Medical City,
Abu Dhabi, UAE



Prof. Pierre Krystkowiak

Consultant Neurology, Specialized Rehabilitation Center, Capital Health
Professor of Neurology, Khalifa University, Abu Dhabi, UAE
Professor of Neurology, University of Picardie, Amiens, France



Dr. Vivek Mundada

Consultant Pediatric Neurology, Medcare Women and Children
Hospital, Dubai, UAE



Dr. Wejdan Hakami

Consultant in Pediatric Neurology, Movement Disorders, and
Neuromodulation
Head of Pediatric Neurology Division, Prince Sultan Military Medical
City, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

INTERNATIONAL SPEAKERS



Dr. Akeel Mithani

CEO, Tilde Sciences, Jersey City, New Jersey, USA



Prof. Brahim Tabarki Melaiki

Consultant Pediatric Neurology, Prince Sultan Military Medical City
Adjunct Professor Pediatric Neurology, Alfaisal University, Riyadh,
Saudi Arabia
Professor of Pediatric Neurology, University of Sousse, Sousse, Tunisia



Prof. Fahad Al Bashiri

Consultant Pediatric Neurology and Epileptology, Department of
Pediatrics, College of Medicine, King Saud University
President, Saudi Pediatric Neurology Society, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



Dr. Kish Mankad

Head of Imaging, Great Ormond Street Childrens Hospital
Associate Professor, University College London, London, United Kingdom



Dr. Mohammed Al Muqbil

Consultant Child Neurology, Medical and Biochemical Genetics
Associate Professor, College of Medicine National Guard Health
Affairs, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



Dr. Ruba Benini

Pediatric Neurologist and Epileptologist
Medical Director of the Neurodiagnostic Laboratory, Sidra Medicine,
Ar Rayyan, Qata



Prof. Tawfeg Ben-Omran

Division Chief, Genetic and Genomic Medicine, Sidra Medicine
Senior Consultant, Medical Genetic Department, Hamad Medical
Corporation
Professor, Weill Cornell Medical College, Doha, Qatar



Dr. Wejdan Hakami

Consultant in Pediatric Neurology, Movement Disorders, and
Neuromodulation
Head of Pediatric Neurology Division, Prince Sultan Military Medical
City, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

UAE-BASED SPEAKERS



Dr. Ahmad Abou Tayoun

Director, Genomics Center of Excellence, Al Jalila Children's Hospital
Associate Professor of Genetics, Center for Genomic Discovery,
Mohammed Bin Rashid University of Medicine and Health Sciences,
Dubai, UAE



Dr. Ajay Dsouza

Consultant, Diagnostic Radiology, Al Jalila Children's Speciality Hospital,
Dubai, UAE



Mr. Alan Taylor

Certified Genetic Counselor, Al Jalila Children's Specialty Hospital, Dubai, UAE



Dr. Aman Sohal

Division Chief, Pediatric Neurology, Al Qassimi Women and Children's Hospital, Sharjah

Consultant Pediatric Neurologist and Neurophysiologist

Founding Partner, Neuropedia Children's Neuroscience Center

Clinical Associate Professor of Pediatric Neurology, Mohammed Bin Rashid University of Medicine and Health Sciences, Dubai, UAE



Dr. Anil Israni

Consultant Pediatric Neurologist, Tawam Hospital, Al Ain, UAE

Director Research, CYP Neuro, London, United Kingdom

Professor of Pediatric Neurology and Visiting Faculty, Parul University, Gujarat, India



Dr. Anwar Baban

Consultant and Head of Department Clinical Molecular Genetics and Precision Medicine, Mediclinic Middle East Hospitals, Dubai, UAE



Dr. Arif Khan

Founder and CEO, Neuropedia Children's Neuroscience Center

Consultant Pediatric Neurologist

Associate Professor, Mohammed Bin Rashid University of Medicine and Health Sciences, Dubai, UAE



Dr. Dina Saleh

Head of Department and Consultant, Pediatric Neurology, Reem Hospital

Associate Clinical Professor, Khalifa University, Abu Dhabi, UAE

Professor of Pediatric Neurology, Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt



Dr. Fatima Ismail

Assistant Professor of Pediatric Neurology and Neurodevelopmental Disabilities, and Director of Pediatric Neuromodulation Laboratory, UAE University, Al Ain

Expert Advisor, Abu Dhabi Early Childhood Authority, Abu Dhabi, UAE

Adjunct Assistant Professor of Neurology, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, Maryland, United States



Dr. Haitham Elbashir

Consultant Pediatric Neurorehabilitation, Al Jalila Children's Specialty Hospital
Clinical Professor of Pediatrics, Mohammed Bin Rashid University of Medicine and Health Sciences, Dubai, UAE



Dr. Heba Elabd

Consultant Clinical Genetics, Al Jalila Children's Specialty Hospital, Dubai, UAE
Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine, Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt



Dr. Hibba Bedri

Clinical Instructor in Pediatrics Neurodevelopment, Mohammed Bin Rashid University of Medicine and Health Sciences
Consultant in Pediatric Neurodisability, Al Jalila Children's Specialty Hospital, Dubai, UA



Dr. Huda Sadek

Consultant Neurodevelopment Pediatrician, Sheikh Khalifa Medical City, Abu Dhabi, UAE



Dr. Majid Aziz

Consultant Pediatric Neurologist, Sheikh Khalifa Medical City, Abu Dhabi, UAE



Dr. Maria Farag

Canadian Certified and DHA-Licensed Genetic Counsellor, Dubai Health Genomic Medicine Center, Dubai, UAE



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President of MENA Congress for Neurogenetic Disorders 2025
Consultant Pediatric Neurology and Director of Pediatric Neurology Residency Program, Al Jalila Children's Specialty Hospital
Clinical Associate Professor, Mohammed Bin Rashid University of Medicine and Health Sciences, Dubai, UAE



Dr. Najwa Albustani

Consultant Neurologist and Neurology Residency Program Director, Neurological Institute, Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi, Abu Dhabi, UAE
Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine, Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio, USA



Dr. Nidheesh Chencheri

Consultant Pediatric Neurologist, Al Jalila Children's Specialty Hospital
Assistant Professor, Mohammed Bin Rashid University of Medicine
and Health Sciences, Dubai, UAE



Dr. Pawan Kashyape

Chief of Division, Neuroscience Centre of Excellence, Al Jalila Children's
Specialty Hospital
Consultant Pediatric Neurologist, Al Jalila Children's Specialty Hospital
and Dubai Academic Health Corporation
Adjunct Associate Professor, Mohamed Bin Rashid University of health
sciences, Dubai, UAE



Prof. Pierre Krystkowiak

Consultant Neurology, Specialized Rehabilitation Center, Capital Health
Professor of Neurology, Khalifa University, Abu Dhabi, UAE
Professor of Neurology, University of Picardie, Amiens, France



Dr. Saleel Chandratre

Consultant Pediatric Neurologist, Sheikh Khalifa Hospital, Ajman, UAE



Dr. Samar Almontaser

Consultant Pediatric Neurologist, Al Jalila Children's Speciality Hospital,
Dubai, UAE



Dr. Sara Almheiri

Neurodevelopmental Pediatrician, Al Jalila Children's Specialty Hospital
Assistant Professor, Mohammed Bin Rashid University of Medicine
and Health Sciences, Dubai, UAE



Dr. Shanwaz Hussain

Consultant Pediatric Neurologist, Sheikh Khalifa Medical City,
Abu Dhabi, UAE



Dr. Shivam Mittal

Section Head and Consultant Neurologist, Parkinson Disease and
Movement Disorders Program, Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi,
Abu Dhabi, UAE



Prof. Sunny Philip

Consultant Pediatric Neurology, Mediclinic City Hospital and Mediclinic Parkview Hospital
Adjunct Clinical Professor, Mohammed Bin Rashid University of Medicine and Health Sciences, Dubai, UAE



Dr. Ubaid Shah

Consultant Pediatric Neurologist and Epileptologist, Director Epilepsy Centre, American Hospital Dubai, Dubai, UAE
Adjunct Clinical Professor, Gulf Medical University, Ajman, UAE



Dr. Vivek Mundada

Consultant Pediatric Neurology, Medcare Women and Children Hospital, Dubai, UAE



Dr. Zeinab Alloub

Consultant Pediatric Neurodevelopment, Al Jalila Children's Specialty Hospital
Assistant Professor, Mohammed Bin Rashid University of Medicine and Health Sciences, Dubai, UAE



**2nd MENA Congress for
Neurogenetic
Disorders 2025**

AGENDA

Day 1: Friday 17 October 2025

Opening Session

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 08:30 AM - 08:50 AM | Addressing the complexity of neurogenetic disorders in the MENA region: let's bridge the gaps!
Speaker: Dr. Mohamed Babiker |
| 08:50 AM - 09:10 AM | How does the future of genetic testing in the Middle East look like?
Speaker: Dr. Ahmad Abou Tayoun |

Genetic Epilepsies

Chairperson: Prof. Fahad Al Bashiri

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 09:10 AM - 09:30 AM | Understanding genetic causes of epilepsy in the Middle East: what do we know so far?
Speaker: Prof. Fahad Al Bashiri |
| 09:30 AM - 09:50 AM | Is precision medicine in epilepsy 'precise' enough?
addressing the controversies
Speaker: Dr. Arif Khan |
| 09:50 AM - 10:10 AM | Beyond medications: novel non-pharmacological strategies for genetic epilepsies
Speaker: Dr. Ruba Benini |
| 10:10 AM - 10:30 AM | Transforming lives: the impact of cannabidiol in Lennox-Gastaut syndrome
Speaker: Dr. Pawan Kashyape |
| 10:30 AM - 10:40 AM | Discussion/ Questions and answers |

10:40 AM - 11:00 AM — Coffee Break

Neurodegenerative Diseases

Chairperson: Prof. Pierre Krystkowiak

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 11:00 AM - 11:20 AM | Decoding Huntington's disease: genetic insights and future directions
Speaker: Prof. Pierre Krystkowiak |
| 11:20 AM - 11:40 AM | Aicardi Goutières syndrome and related syndromes: a diagnostic conundrum!
Speaker: Dr. Aman Sohal |
| 11:40 AM - 12:00 PM | Parkinsonism in neurodegenerative disorders: a diagnostic and therapeutic overview
Speaker: Dr. Shivam Mittal |

12:00 PM - 12:20 PM	Genomics and imaging in pediatric white matter disorders Speaker: Prof. Sunny Philip
12:20 PM - 12:40 PM	Progressive myoclonic epilepsies: from genes to phenotypes to therapeutics Speaker: Dr. Ubaid Shah
12:40 PM - 01:00 PM	Discussion/ Questions and answers

01:00 PM - 02:00 PM — Lunch Break

Movement Disorders

Chairperson: Dr. Wejdan Hakami

02:00 PM - 02:25 PM	The expanding landscape of genetically determined paroxysmal movement disorders Speaker: Dr. Wejdan Hakami
02:25 PM - 02:50 PM	Genetic mimics of cerebral palsy: are we still missing them? Speaker: Dr. Fatima Ismail
02:50 PM - 03:15 PM	Biotin-thiamine-responsive basal ganglia disease: a never-miss diagnosis! Speaker: Prof. Brahim Tabarki Melaiki
03:15 PM - 03:40 PM	The genetics of Parkinsonism: the state of affairs in 2025 Speaker: Dr. Mohammed Al Muqbil
03:40 PM - 04:00 PM	Discussion/ Questions and answers

04:00 PM - 04:30 PM — Coffee Break

Neurometabolic Diseases

Chairperson: Prof. Brahim Tabarki Melaiki

04:30 PM - 04:50 PM	Congenital disorders of Autophagy: an emerging class of inborn errors of neuro-metabolism Speaker: Prof. Brahim Tabarki Melaiki
04:50 PM - 05:10 PM	Advancing access and adherence for biotin-thiamine-responsive basal ganglia disease Speaker: Dr. Akeel Mithani
05:10 PM - 05:30 PM	Advanced approach to diagnosis and treatment of inborn neurometabolic disorders Speaker: Prof. Tawfeg Ben-Omran
05:30 PM - 05:50 PM	Precision medicine and management options for neurometabolic disorders Speaker: Dr. Anwar Baban
05:50 PM - 06:00 PM	Discussion/ Questions and answers

Day 2: Saturday 18 October 2025

Neurodevelopmental Disorders

Chairperson: Dr. Haitham Elbashir

Co-chairperson: Dr. Sara Almheiri

08:30 AM - 08:55 AM **Neurodiversity and genomics: new perspectives on brain variation**

Speaker: Dr. Haitham Elbashir

08:55 AM - 09:20 AM **Chromosomal - related neurodevelopmental disorders: from phenotypes to personalized management**

Speaker: Dr. Zeinab Alloub

09:20 AM - 09:45 AM **Gene-environment interactions in attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD): a complex interplay**

Speaker: Dr. Huda Sadek

09:45 AM - 10:10 AM **An update on the big 'why' of autism. The role of genetics and the mitochondria**

Speaker: Dr. Shanwaz Hussain

10:10 AM - 10:30 AM **Discussion/ Questions and answers**

10:30 AM - 11:00 AM — Coffee Break

Neuromuscular Diseases

Chairperson: Dr. Vivek Mundada

Co-chairperson: Dr. Nidheesh Chencheri

11:00 AM - 11:25 AM **Outcome measures in neuromuscular disorders: from benchmark to clinical practice**

Speaker: Dr. Vivek Mundada

11:25 AM - 11:50 AM **Skeletal muscle channelopathies from childhood to adulthood: a guide to diagnosis and management**

Speaker: Dr. Najwa Albustani

11:50 AM - 12:15 PM **At the junction: current directions in congenital myasthenia syndromes**

Speaker: Dr. Saleel Chandratre

12:15 PM - 12:40 PM **TBA**

12:40 PM - 01:00 PM **Discussion/ Questions and answers**

01:00 PM - 02:00 PM — Lunch Break

Advancements in Therapeutics

Chairperson : Dr. Majid Aziz

Co-chairperson: Dr. Hibba Bedri

02:00 PM - 02:20 PM	Targeting the roots: gene therapy for neurogenetic disorders Speaker: Dr. Majid Aziz
02:20 PM - 02:40 PM	Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the diagnosis and management of neurogenetic disorders: can it be 'intelligent' enough? Speaker: Dr. Anil Israni
02:40 PM - 03:00 PM	A video is worth a thousand pictures: inspiring stories Speaker: Dr. Dina Saleh
03:00 PM - 03:15 PM	Discussion/ Questions and answers

Abstract Presentations

03:15 PM - 03:25 PM	Abstract 1
03:25 PM - 03:35 PM	Abstract 2
03:35 PM - 03:45 PM	Abstract 3

03:45 PM - 04:00 PM — Coffee Break

Workshops

04:00 PM - 05:30 PM	Workshop 1: Neuroimaging in neurogenetic disorders <ul style="list-style-type: none">- To illustrate role of neuroimaging in diagnosing neurogenetic disorders presenting during both childhood and adulthood.- To raise awareness amongst clinicians regarding pattern recognition approaches in neuroimaging.- To share real life cases whereby neuroimaging aided in improving the precision of the diagnosis of neurogenetic disorders Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Kish Mankad• Dr. Ajay Dsouza• Dr. Samar Almontaser
04:00 PM - 05:30 PM	Workshop 2: How to navigate through the variants of uncertain significance (VUS) Maze <ul style="list-style-type: none">- To increase awareness amongst clinicians about the different testing modalities in clinical genomics- To understand classification system of genetic variants- To develop a practical approach to variants of uncertain significance (SUV) in clinical practice Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Alan Taylor• Dr. Heba Elabd• Dr. Maria Farag

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FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Mryam Bahdi
Event coordinator

✉: mryam.bahdi@menararediseases.com

☎: +971554306336

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