



Member of Qatar Foundation

A heart-warming patient story from Sidra for World Heart Day First patient to receive a P-Valve implant without open-heart surgery

Doha, Qatar, 27 September 2017 – 20 year old Ahlam was born in Qatar with a congenital heart defect (CHD) known as [Tetralogy of Fallot](#), this is a hole between the lower chambers of the heart and an obstruction between the heart and the lungs, with a defective pulmonic valve.

To treat her condition, Ahlam had to endure several procedures, including major open-heart surgery, as an infant. As she grew older, Ahlam experienced more complications including a leaky valve that resulted in a significant enlargement of her heart.

Ahlam was a patient at Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), and in 2016 was transferred to a joint care program between HMC and Sidra Medical and Research Center (Sidra) under the supervision of Prof. Ziyad M. Hijazi, Chair of the Department of Pediatrics and Director of the Sidra Cardiac Program.

Prof. Hijazi is an interventional cardiologist and pioneering specialist in treating congenital and structural heart disease in both children and adults. His major area of interest is in the development of techniques, catheters, devices and valves to help treat or cure congenital and structural cardiac disease without open-heart surgery.

Commenting on Ahlam's procedure and care, Prof. Hijazi said, "I had been following Ahlam's case closely and at first it seemed like the only option available to her was another open-heart surgery. However, in March of this year, we received permission to use the Venus P-Valve implant in Qatar as part of a clinical trial that involves several centers across Europe and Asia. I discussed the option with her and her family, who were quick to embrace it. In April 2017, Ahlam became our first p-valve implantation patient in Qatar."

Ahlam's operation took place at Hamad General Hospital and was performed jointly by Prof. Hijazi and Dr. Qi-Ling Cao from Sidra, and Dr. Hesham Al-Saloos, an interventional cardiologist from HMC. "Ahlam's operation was completed in just under three hours, requiring only three days recovery. She was happily out and about and came back to see me for a check-up within the week! It was truly remarkable!" continued Prof. Hijazi.

Now, six months after the operation and in support of World Heart Day - 29 September 2017 - Ahlam shares how her life has progressed and the small victories she gets to enjoy every day: "Given that I have been going to hospitals and for check-ups all my life, I was scared – thinking I would need another open-heart surgery! I was keen to try this new procedure because of the medical complications that resulted from a surgery I had as a child. The complications made it quite difficult to do even simple tasks. The new procedure was fast and all it took was a small incision to insert the replacement valve."

"I am very grateful to the care and treatment that Dr. Hijazi and his team provided to me and my family. They reassured us every step of the way. We really appreciated how he and his team

addressed all my doubts in a way that made me more comfortable and calm by the time the surgery was scheduled.”

“After the new procedure, I was able to go back to leading a normal life quite quickly! My heart beat is also at a normal rate. Now, I enjoy simple things such as carrying my bag and going up or down the stairs. Small things that I was unable to do before, I can now do comfortably and confidently. Most importantly, I can finally sleep well.”

The Venus P-Valve is a new valve that is seeking to address the needs of a large majority of CHD patients who are unable to benefit from existing minimally-invasive valve implantations and have to undergo open-heart surgery. Prof. Hijazi is the Global Principal Investigator leading a consortium of international cardiac interventionists to evaluate the valve. To read more about the valve and Prof. Hijazi’s initial progress in bringing the innovation to Qatar, please click [here](#).

Ahlam has a very positive message for other children and adults with CHD: “The first advice I have - is to break the barrier of fear. Fear will only take your health backwards. I believe that technology has advanced to such an extent that medical procedures have become easier and more efficient. While questions remain, it is critical to discuss your concerns with your doctor and let them address all your doubts - particularly when it comes to new procedures.”

“It was an honor for me to be the first patient to undergo this surgery in Qatar. I was comforted by the excellent care I received from the wonderful doctors and nurses at Sidra and HMC. By having the procedure and the aftercare in Qatar, it took away the stress and financial burden of having to consider a trip overseas to get the best treatment! I received the same level of professionalism and care here at Sidra. With the way my family and I were taken care of, I truly hope Sidra continues to provide the highest standard of care as some of the best international hospitals in the world.”

- ENDS -

About Sidra Medical and Research Center

Sidra Medical and Research Center will be a groundbreaking hospital, research and education institution, focusing on the health and wellbeing of children and women regionally and globally.

Sidra represents the vision of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser who serves as its Chairperson. The high-tech facility will not only provide world-class patient care but will also help build Qatar's scientific expertise and resources.

Sidra will be a fully digital facility, incorporating the most advanced information technology applications in all its functions. Designed by renowned architect Cesar Pelli, Sidra features a main hospital building and a separate outpatient clinic.

Sidra opened its Outpatient Clinic on 1 May 2016 and offers outpatient services for women and children through a referral based system in partnership with other healthcare providers in Qatar.



Sidra is also part of a dynamic research and education environment in Qatar and through strong partnerships with leading institutions around the world, Sidra is creating an intellectual ecosystem to help advance scientific discovery through investment in medical research. For more information please visit www.sidra.org.

For any media inquiries, please contact:

Farhana Coelho

T: (974) 44042176

E: fcoelho@sidra.org

The Communications Department

Sidra Medical and Research Center

