

**ELPA**

European Liver  
Patients' Association

**FATTY LIVER**  
an overlooked disease  
**2021**

[www.elpa.eu](http://www.elpa.eu)   [office@elpa.eu](mailto:office@elpa.eu)   + 32 478 155 224

Dear ELPA Friends,

The **#FattyLiverMonth** is here!

Let's remind all our members, partners, decision-makers, and stakeholders that NASH/NAFLD is our next most significant challenge in Europe as its rate among the population is increasing.

This is the main reason why raising awareness on NASH and NAFLD is such important.

And this year, more than ever, ELPA is putting a lot of effort into organizing activities around these liver diseases.

Firstly, ELPA's social media campaign will raise awareness on NASH/NAFLD among decision-makers, patients, clinicians, and the general public, pushing forward the discussion and promoting better and more comprehensive communication on this topic.

However, ELPA engagement in this field goes beyond because, despite its increased recognition as a significant health threat, fatty liver disease associated with metabolic dysfunction remains primarily underdiagnosed and undertreated. This is why ELPA will organize a Symposium entirely dedicated to NASH/NAFLD in all its facets. It will be held on June 10, International NASH day 2021, and it will gather together patients and experts in different medical fields.

In ELPA, though, we believe that International days and special occasions are not enough. Patient advocacy is day-by-day work. I am honoured to tell you that ELPA is fighting for the disease to be renamed from non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) to metabolic-associated fatty liver disease (MAFLD). In a research published in THE LANCET Gastroenterology and Hepatology, together with an international team of researchers, ELPA has called for reframing the condition. For ELPA, the new acronym MAFLD is clear. It places the disease as a manifestation of metabolic dysfunction. Also, the new acronym is devoid of any stigma.

Let me thank all the members of the ELPA Working Group explicitly to NASH/NAFLD, who coordinated all these activities and whose commitment is a source of inspiration for everybody in ELPA.

And remember:

NASH is considered to be caused by the "western" lifestyle, thus an unhealthy diet and sedentary culture. As there is still no treatment for NASH, the best way of dealing with the condition is for the patient to implement lifestyle changes. To reduce NASH/NAFLD risk, it is advisable to adopt a healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and healthy fats, exercise regularly, and maintain a healthy weight.

So, let's eat better, move more and continue enjoying life!

Marko Korenjak, ELPA President

Dear,

The European Liver Patients Association (ELPA) is pleased to announce that we have organized a series of actions from 17th of May for over a month, culminating in a virtual Symposium which is going to be held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June, at 10 am (CET).

This Symposium, besides the scientific approach of the disease by our eminent speakers, will also give the opportunity to NASH patients to share with us their own testimony of how they deal with this life-threatening disease.

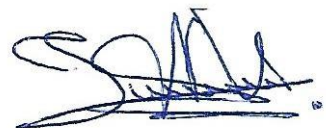
According to the WHO, up to 444 million people worldwide are living with a progressive; chronic liver condition referred to as non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH). On top of this is that an estimated 10% of children also currently have NASH. NASH is closely associated with obesity, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, and cardiovascular disease (CVD) and is projected to rise in parallel to these diseases. NASH can be life-threatening, as it can cause liver scarring (called cirrhosis), liver cancer or liver failure, but its symptoms are often silent or non-specific to NASH, making it difficult to diagnose. As a result, NASH patients can remain unaware of their condition until late stages of the disease. No pharmaceutical treatments are available for the NASH disease.

We remain at your disposal

With kind regards,



Marko Korenjak  
President of the European Liver Patients' Association



Yiannoula Koulla  
Group leader of ELPAS MAFLD/NASH

The logo for ELPA (European Liver Patients' Association) features the acronym 'ELPA' in a large, bold, white sans-serif font. The letters are set against a light orange, irregularly shaped background that resembles a stylized liver or a splash of paint. The background of the entire page is composed of several overlapping, semi-transparent orange shapes in various shades, creating a dynamic, abstract composition.

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# ELPA NASH SYMPOSIUM 2021

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# EUROPEAN LIVER PATIENTS' ASSOCIATION

## ELPA NAFLD/NASH SYMPOSIUM

### Fatty liver an overlooked disease

#### Overcoming barriers for patients with fatty liver disease - implementing the latest advancements

10<sup>th</sup> June 2021, virtual event

Chairs of the meeting: Dr Teresa Casanovas, Mrs Yiannoula Koulla

TIMING	AGENDA ITEM	SPEAKER
10:00 – 10:15	Welcome	Mr Marko Korenjak, ELPA President, Belgium
	Greetings from	Mr Loucas Fourlas, Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats), member of the Special Committee on Beating Cancer, Republic of Cyprus  Mr George Georgiou, Member of the European Parliament. Member of the Left group in the European Parliament - GUE/NGL, Republic of Cyprus  Mr Marco Greco, President of the European Patients' Forum, Belgium  Mr Constantinos Ioannou, Minister of Health, Republic of Cyprus

		<p>Mrs Yianoulla Koulla, President of Cyprus Liver Patients' Association, Leader of ELPA NAFLD / NASH group, Republic of Cyprus</p> <p>Dr Teresa Casanovas Leader of ELPA Scientific Committee, ELPA Director, Spain</p>
10:15 – 10:25	Treatment of NAFLD – from lifestyle intervention to bariatric surgery	<p>Prof Henning Groenbaek Department of Hepatology &amp; Gastroenterology, Aarhus University Hospital, Aarhus, Denmark</p>
10:25 – 10:35	Change the name from NAFLD to MAFLD . Advantages from the point of view of patients and hepatologists.	<p>Prof Gamal Shiha, G.I &amp; liver unit, Mansoura University - Egypt, Association of Liver Patients Care (ALPC), the Egyptian Liver Research Institute And Hospital (ELRIAH), Egypt</p>
10:35 – 10:45	Chronic Liver Disease related to alcohol, the particular risks on patients suffering from liver steatosis are higher and they have a faster progression of their liver disease. Patients need more information about it." (*video-interview)	<p>Dr Ramon Bataller, Hepatologist, researcher, alcohol risks specialist, University of Pittsburgh, Department of Medicine, Pittsburgh, USA</p>
10:45 – 10:55	Diagnosis and Treatment of Paediatric NAFLD	<p>Dr Panayiota Protopapa Clinical Lead and specialist Paediatrician Paediatric Liver, GI and Nutrition Centre Archbishop Makarios III Hospital and King's College Hospital, Republic of Cyprus</p>
10:55-11:05	Break	
11:05 – 11:15	An update on liver transplant for NASH with or without HCC. Particular challenges in this population in 2021	<p>Dr Gonzalo Crespo, Transplant hepatologist, Liver Unit, Hospital Clínic, Barcelona, IDIBAPS and CIBERehd, Spain</p>

11:15 – 11:25	Nutritional treatment of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease in a nutshell (*short video)	Prof Shira Zelber-Sagi Associate Professor Head of School of Public Health, Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences, University of Haifa The Tel-Aviv Medical Center, Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Israel
11:25 – 11:35	Move for health	Veronika Všetíčkova Physiotherapist, healthy lifestyle coach, Slovenia
11:35 – 11:45	Interview with patients (*short videos)	Mrs Petra Saarinen Mr Milan Mishkovikj
11:45 – 12:00	Closing remarks	Mr Marko Korenjak, ELPA President, Belgium

ELPA events' supporters:





## Mr Marko Korenjak

**European Liver Patients' Association - ELPA, Slovenian Association for patients suffering from Hepatitis - SLOVENIA HEP**

*Mr. Korenjak is the current President of the European Liver Patients' Association - ELPA and the President of SLOVENIA HEP, the Slovenian Association for patients suffering from Hepatitis. He is a Ph.D. candidate in Communications, Strategic Communication Management and Health Communication. As part of his involvement in Patients' Associations, he is leading activities of communication and dissemination in the framework of many EU-funded medical research projects. He was nominated by the Economist as one out of the 18 most influential people in the world in the field of Hepatitis elimination in 2017. Former patient himself, his activities are focused on making patients' voices heard at the highest political level.*

## Mr Loucas Furlas

**European Parliament**

*Mr. Furlas is a Member of the European Parliament from Cyprus, Member of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats). His parliamentary activities are focused mainly on public health and social policies. He is member of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, the Intergroup on Trade Unions, the Intergroup on Disability, the Intergroup on Children's Rights, and he is President of the Special Committee on Beating Cancer. He is also the founder of the philanthropic organization "Little Heroes" –children who suffer from cancer, and ambassador of the Charity Foundation "Hope".*





## Mr George Georgiou

### **European Parliament**

*Mr. Georgiou is a Member of the European Parliament from Cyprus, Member of the Left group in the European Parliament - GUE/NGL. At the European Parliament he is member of the Special Committee on Beating Cancer. At the national level, he was elected MP for the first time in the parliamentary elections of 2011 and re-elected in the 2016. He was a member of the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources, the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign and European Affairs, the Parliamentary Committee on Institutions, Values and the Commissioner for Administration and the Parliamentary Committee on Education and Culture. In addition, he was the head of the Parliamentary delegation to the Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly.*



## Mr Marco Greco

### **European Patients' Forum - EPF**

*Mr Greco is the President of the European Patients' Forum. He currently sits on the Management Board of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and acts as an observer on the Patients and Consumers Working Party (PCWP). He works as an attorney at his law firm, focusing on litigation, commerce and consumers' protection. He has been chairman of the European Federation of Crohn's and Ulcerative Colitis Associations (EFCCA) and the founder of the EFCCA Youth Group. After an LL.M.M in Law, he earned a PhD in Law and Religion, religious freedom and discrimination and canon law at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore-Milano, where he collaborates with the Chair of History and Systems of Church-State relationships.*

## Mr. Constantinos Ioannou

### **Minister of Health, Cyprus**

*Mr. Ioannou graduated in 1987 from the English School in Lefkosia and studied at the Manchester School of Management, UK where he obtained his Bachelor Degree in Accounting and Marketing. He is a founding partner and member of the Board of Directors in an organization specialized in business media and human capital consulting and training. He is also the founding partner and managing director of a master franchisor coffee company in Cyprus.*

*As Minister of Health he succeeded in implementing, with many efforts, the National Health System (NHS) in Cyprus. Also, during the last year, he was on the first line to successfully cope with the COVID-19 pandemic and to improve the epidemiological situation in Cyprus, putting the island amongst the best countries in managing the effects of the health crisis.*



## Mrs Yanoulla Koulla

**Yiannoula Koulla is the president of Cyprus Liver Patients Association and a leader of ELPA's NAFLD/NASH group.**

*Mrs Koulla got her diploma in Biochemistry and few years later a diploma in Public Relations. She worked for many years for J&J pharmaceutical company as a product specialist in charge for products of the central nervous system.*

*(CNS). Her involvement with patients began when she became a patient herself and has been working for patients' rights ever since.*

## Dr Teresa Casanovas

**European Liver Patients' Association - ELPA, Associació Catalana de Pacients Hepàtics - ASSCAT**

*Dr. Teresa Casanovas is a hepatologist, President of the Spanish ELPA Member association ASSCAT, ELPA Director, and Leader of the ELPA Scientific Committee. She worked in Hospital of Bellvitge from 1980 to 2016. She focused her career on clinical care and research dedicated to liver diseases and liver patients. She was involved in the start of the Liver Transplant Program, the first in Spain. She participated, as principal investigator, in numerous clinical trials for patients with viral hepatitis (mostly with treatment interferon based). She also received research grants for studies on health related quality of life (HRQOL) in liver patients. Since she retired she has been advocating for liver patients at national and international level.*



## Prof Henning Groenbaek

**Department of Hepatology & Gastroenterology, Aarhus University Hospital, Aarhus, Denmark**

*Prof Henning Grønbaek (MD, PhD) is professor in hepatology at the Department of Hepatology & Gastroenterology, Aarhus University Hospital, Denmark, and has had a key interest in non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) for the last decades. His research has focused on biomarkers for NAFLD severity including treatment responses in both experimental and clinical NAFLD. He is author on a number of publications in the NAFLD field including national guidelines for screening, diagnosis and treatment of NAFLD.*

## Prof Gamal Shiha

**G.I & liver unit, Mansoura University - Egypt, Association of Liver Patients Care (ALPC), the Egyptian Liver Research Institute And Hospital (ELRIAH)**

*Professor of internal medicine, and the head of G.I & liver unit, Mansoura University, the founder and head of the Association of Liver Patients Care (ALPC) & the Egyptian Liver Research Institute And Hospital (ELRIAH), a hospital and institute of liver research to be number one in the Arabic Area. For his lifetime outstanding contributions to medicine, he is a member of various scientific societies; the Egyptian Gastrointestinal Endoscopic Society, European Association for the Study of the liver (EASL), American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD), and Asian Pacific Association for the study of liver diseases (APASL).*



## Dr Ramon Bataller

**University of Pittsburgh Medical Center**

*Dr. Bataller was senior physician at the Liver Unit of the Hospital Clinic in Barcelona where he coordinated the management of patients with alcoholic liver disease. He performed several translational studies in alcoholic hepatitis and identified several novel targets for therapy. At the University of North Carolina he led an international effort to develop the first histological classification of alcoholic hepatitis (AHHS). Since 2011, he has been the overall PI of an NIAAA-funded international consortium to study alcoholic hepatitis (InTeam). This consortium involved 12 clinical sites and we have recruited over 300 patients with alcoholic hepatitis including a number of biospecimens. Currently, he is the Chief of Hepatology at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.*

## Dr Panayiota Protopapa

**Archbishop Makarios III Children's Hospital in Nicosia  
Cyprus - National Paediatric Liver, GI and Nutrition  
Centre, Cyprus, King's College Hospital**

*Dr. Protopapa graduated from the Medical School of the National Kapodistrian University of Athens. She is a diplomate of the American Board of Paediatrics and Fellow-Paediatric in Infectious Diseases in Children's Hospital of the University of Cincinnati Ohio. She is working in Archbishop Makarios III Children's Hospital in Nicosia Cyprus since 1996. She has been collaborating with King's College Hospital since the year 2000, for the development of Children's Liver and then Gastroenterology Services in Cyprus. As a result, was the establishment of a National Paediatric Liver, GI and Nutrition Centre in Cyprus. She is the founder, Clinical Lead, and specialist Paediatrician of the Centre.*



## Dr Gonzalo Crespo

**Liver Unit, Hospital Clínic, Barcelona (Spain), IDIBAPS and  
CIBERehd**

*Dr. Crespo is a Transplant hepatologist at the Liver Unit, Hospital Clínic, Barcelona (Spain) and researcher at IDIBAPS and CIBERehd, with extensive experience in medical management of liver transplant candidates and recipients. His areas of interest include viral hepatitis (particularly recurrent hepatitis C after liver transplantation), the evaluation of liver transplant candidates including living donor liver transplantation, and the outcomes of liver transplant. He is in the board of the Catalan Society of Transplantation, and member of ESOT, ILTS, EASL and other scientific societies.*

## Prof Shira Zelber-Sagi

**School of Public Health, Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences, University of Haifa. The Tel-Aviv Medical Center, Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Israel.**

*Prof. Zelber-Sagi is a clinical dietitian, Epidemiologist and a researcher in nutritional epidemiology and NAFLD. Currently, is an associate professor and the Dean of the School of Public Health, Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences, University of Haifa. Prof. Zelber-Sagi is also a member of the EASL Policy and Public Health Committee and the United European Gastroenterology (UEG) Policy and Public Health Committee.*



## Ms Veronika Všetíčkova

**Veronika Všetíčkova is a physiotherapist, specialized in a section of kinesiology and lifestyle management and a member of ELPA Working Group NAFLD/NASH. Ms Všetíčkova has over 15 years of experiences in working with people in-person and remotely - helping and encouraging transforming their lifestyle and daily habits to reach their desired goals – physically and mentally.**

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# **NASH SYMPOSIUM 2021**

## Key messages

1. Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) is an umbrella term for a range of liver conditions affecting people who drink little to no alcohol. As the name implies, the main characteristic of NAFLD is too much fat stored in liver cells.
2. Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) affects approximately 1 in 4 members of the general population across Europe and so is a major health problem due to its high prevalence, capacity to progress to liver cirrhosis and liver cancer, and also because it is associated with a greater risk of cardiovascular disease & other malignancies. It is the no.1 cause for liver transplantation in Europe.
3. Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) has emerged as one of the most common chronic liver diseases in the paediatric population, largely due to the rising obesity epidemic in children and adults
4. The more severe form of NAFLD is called non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH). It is marked by liver inflammation and may progress to advanced scarring (cirrhosis) and liver failure.
5. NASH tends to develop in people who are overweight or obese or have diabetes, high cholesterol or high triglycerides. However, some people have NASH even if they do not have any risk factors.
6. NAFLD is strongly linked with unhealthy lifestyles. This is driven by:
  - Excessive energy intake and an unhealthy diet, which is in part a consequence of advertising, increasing availability and low cost of industrially processed fast food and sugared sweetened beverages.
  - Lack of physical activityThis means that there is a great potential to treat or prevent NAFLD from developing, especially if at risk groups are effectively targeted for intervention.
7. Population-level measures to promote lifestyle change have been shown to be effective at preventing obesity and encouraging weight loss, which has a well-demonstrated efficacy in treating NAFLD.
8. Unless patients with NAFLD are identified and diagnosed, they are denied the knowledge and opportunity to make the necessary changes. It is important to identify, and risk-stratify patients with NAFLD in order to implement therapeutic interventions.



## European Liver Patients' Association

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