



## Sahar Swidan, PharmD, ABAAHP, FAARFM, FACA

of **Pharmacy Solutions** in Ann Arbor, Michigan

### A PATH TO COMPOUNDING

Sahar Swidan has been compounding for over 18 years, but initially, she had planned to pursue another path in health care. "I applied to medical school and was accepted," says Sahar. Before she could attend med school, though, she had a fortuitous interaction. "I met the husband of a pharmacy student at that time, and he was telling me all about this great pharmacy school at the University of Michigan, and suggested that I should speak to his wife before committing to medical school," she says.

Sahar talked to her, and then started talking to others as well. "I spoke to a great dean at that time, and she changed my mind on the spot, it seems, and here I am," she says. "I'm so glad I switched, as the profession of pharmacy has been such a blessing and such a great career track for me. I love teaching, lecturing, taking care of patients and working with providers all day long to help patients on their new paths of wellness."

Sahar then became familiar with compounding after pharmacy school. "I learned about compounding when I was doing my post-doctoral fellowship in Europe, as it was very big there." And she continued back in the U.S. "I also learned about compounding from a great pharmacist I worked with when I became the director of pharmacy at Chelsea Hospital," Sahar says, referring to Chelsea

Community Hospital in Chelsea, Michigan. "I loved the personalized/holistic medicine approach I learned in Europe, and also the personalization of prescriptions that could be achieved with compounding."

### FAVORITE FORMULAS

When asked about her favorite PCCA formulas, Sahar says, "I love many, but since I mostly consult with patients and providers in pain management, most that I encounter deal with pain creams and hormones," such as PCCA Formula #7835 (Ketamine 50 mg/mL Nasal Spray). "But I modify it with MucoLox™, as it sticks better," she says.

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Sahar also likes PCCA Formula #10287 (Diclofenac Sodium 5%/Gabapentin 5%/ Amitriptyline HCl 2% Topical Lipoderm ActiveMax® (FormulaPlus™ + BUD Study)), and in keeping with her experience in pain management, Sahar brings up a formula of her own, which has ketoprofen, MSM and DMSO in Lipoderm®.

Finally, she also mentions estriol vaginal gels with MucoLox, such as PCCA Formula #11115 (Estriol 0.05% Vaginal Gel (MucoLox/VersaBase®)).

### THE SUCCESS IS IN THE STORIES

For a success story, Sahar refers back to her MucoLox-based version of PCCA Formula #7835 (Ketamine 50 mg/mL Nasal Spray). She had a patient with chronic, nerve-related facial pain. "This patient had severe postherpetic neuralgia in the V1 distribution of her trigeminal nerve, and it was so hard to control her pain," says Sahar. Postherpetic neuralgia is caused by shingles.

"She had many blocks that did not work, and many oral medications that were mainly antiseizure medications, which did not work," Sahar says. "She had the issue for almost six months before coming to us." Fortunately, though, Sahar was able to help. "She was very thankful and happy."

### WORDS OF WISDOM

For advice, Sahar is brief: "Love the art of compounding, and really embrace the power that compounding can provide to your patients to tailor a physiological and personal approach to their care."

*This interview has been edited for clarity and length. The views/therapies expressed in the above article are those of the interviewee and may not be endorsed by PCCA.*

*Pharmacy Solutions is owned by Sahar Swidan, PharmD, ABAAHF, FAARFM, FACA.*

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