



Vasant (Vas) Narasimhan, M.D.

Chief Executive Officer since 2018

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Since becoming CEO of Novartis in 2018, Vas has led a strategic and cultural transformation to build a fully focused medicines company—one that delivers high-value medicines that alleviate society’s greatest disease burdens through technology leadership in R&D and novel access approaches. He leads a company of more than 78 000 associates that does business in approximately 130 countries and that reached more than 250 million patients with innovative medicines in 2023.

Over the last five years, Vas has sharpened the company’s focus on key therapeutic areas and technology platforms, including siRNA, radioligand, and gene and cell therapies, to deliver new medicines for patients with cardiovascular disease, cancer and rare but debilitating genetic disorders. In parallel, he has led a transformation to make culture a driver of innovation, reputation and performance at Novartis, while advancing a digital revolution to use data science and technology to find new ways to discover and develop medicines and increase efficiency.

I never lose my sense of wonder at how human ingenuity is leading to longer, healthier lives. At Novartis, we are reimagining medicine by using innovative science and technology to address some of society’s most challenging and long-standing healthcare issues. We discover and develop breakthrough treatments and find new ways to deliver them to as many people as possible.

Vas has focused his education and career on improving human health and on his personal purpose of inspiring a healthier world. During and after his medical studies, he worked on public health issues such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis in India, Africa and South America. He continues to champion access and global health priorities, including through a commitment by Novartis to expand access to innovative medicines in low- and middle-income countries by at least 200% by 2025.

Since joining Novartis in 2005, Vas has held a range of leadership roles, including Global Head of Development for Novartis Vaccines, and Global Head of Drug Development and Chief Medical Officer. In recognition of his sustained efforts to improve human health, he is an elected member of the National Academy of Medicine in the US, and a member of the board of fellows at Harvard Medical School. Vas previously served as chair of the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), and remains on its board of directors.

Originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Vas lives in Basel, Switzerland, with his wife and two sons. A lifelong vegetarian, he is passionate about environmental and wildlife conservation — and is Chair of the African Parks Network in South Africa. He is an avid reader on topics including history, leadership and philosophy.

Nationality: American | **Year of birth:** 1976

Professional experience

- Global Head of Drug Development and Chief Medical Officer, Novartis AG, Switzerland (2016–2018)
- Global Head of Development, Novartis Pharmaceuticals, Switzerland (2014–2016)
- Global Head of Biopharmaceuticals and Oncology Injectables, Sandoz International, Germany (2014)
- Global Head of Development, Novartis Vaccines, US (2012–2014)
- North America Region Head, Novartis Vaccines, and US Country President, Novartis Vaccines and Diagnostics, US (2008–2012)
- Joined Novartis in 2005

Mandates

Current:

- Member, National Academy of Medicine, US
- Board member, Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), US
- Committee member, Biopharmaceutical CEOs Roundtable (BCR), International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations (IFPMA), Switzerland

Past:

- Chair, Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), US (2023–2024)

Education

- Doctor of medicine, Harvard Medical School, US
- Master's degree in public policy, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, US
- Bachelor's degree in biological sciences, University of Chicago, US

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