Mark Your Calendar: Innovations in Cataract Surgery

Cataract surgery is one of the most common operations performed in the United States. In about 90 percent of cases, people who have cataract surgery have better vision afterward. Rachel Bishop, M.D., National Eye Institute, National Institutes of Health, will discuss the different types of cataract surgery and leading innovations in these procedures. She will also talk about the risks of cataract surgery, and what to expect before, during, and after surgery. Free parking is available. First Connection Share Group will meet at 9:30 a.m. before the lecture.
Calendar of Events

• Saturday, November 8, 2008
Macular Degeneration Network, “Innovations in Cataract Surgery” 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Rachel Bishop, M.D.
First Connection Share Group, 9:30 a.m.
Sibley Memorial Hospital, Ernst Auditorium
5255 Loughboro Road, NW
Washington, DC 20016

• Tuesday, November 11, 2008
Share Group, 2 p.m.
Falcon’s Landing
20522 Falcon’s Landing Circle
Potomac Falls, VA 20165

• Monday, November 17, 2008
Low Vision Support Group, 11 a.m., Lunch provided
Washington Hospital Center, Eye Clinic
110 Irving Street, NW
Washington, DC 20010
Call (202) 877-6081 to reserve lunch.

• Tuesday, November 18, 2008
Low Vision Lunch and Learn, “Perfect Products to Enhance Independence,” 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.
Friendship Heights Village Center
4433 Southpark Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

• Wednesday, November 19, 2008
Share Group, 10 a.m.
Vinson Hall
6251 Old Dominion Drive
McLean, VA 22101
Calendar of Events

• **Wednesday, November 19, 2008**
  “Diabetes and Your Eyes,” 1:30 p.m.
  Lisa Collea, M.D.
  Sibley Memorial Hospital, Renaissance Building
  5255 Loughboro Road, NW
  Washington, DC 20016

• **Thursday, November 20, 2008**
  Aging Eye Network, “Don’t Go Blind to Diabetes”
  *Free Glaucoma Screenings, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.*
  Stephen Pappas, Jr., M.D., 1:15 p.m.
  Holiday Park Multiservice Senior Center
  3950 Ferrara Drive
  Silver Spring, MD 20906

• **Thursday, November 20, 2008**
  Tea & Conversation, “Maximizing Your Sight: An Update”
  1:30 - 3 p.m.
  Sulieman Alibhai, O.D.
  Charles E. Beatley, Jr. Central Library
  5005 Duke Street
  Alexandria, VA 22304

• **Thursday, November 20, 2008**
  Stargardt’s Network, 6:15 p.m.
  Food Factory
  4221 N. Fairfax Drive
  Arlington, VA 22203

For more information on these events, please call POB at (202) 234-1010
Patients with Diabetes

Older treatment may be more effective in preserving sight for some patients

A promising new drug therapy used to treat abnormal swelling in the eye, a condition called diabetic macular edema, proved less effective than traditional laser treatments in a study funded by the National Eye Institute (NEI), part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The study, published online in July in the journal Ophthalmology, demonstrates that laser therapy is not only more effective than corticosteroids in the long term treatment of diabetic macular edema, but also has far fewer side effects.

Between 40 and 45 percent of the 18 million Americans diagnosed with diabetes have vision problems, such as diabetic macular edema. This condition occurs when the center part of the eye’s retina called the macula swells, possibly leading to blindness. Ophthalmologists traditionally use lasers to reduce the swelling in areas of the macula. However, starting around five years ago, early reports of success in treating diabetic macular edema with injections of a corticosteroid called triamcinolone led to the rise in popularity of this alternative therapy. This is the first study to compare the long-term benefits of both treatments and evaluate their
potential side effects. While triamcinolone was used in this study, there is no scientific rationale at this time that one corticosteroid preparation should be substantially different from another.

“Results of this study should confirm the use of laser treatment for diabetic macular edema and will have a significant impact on quality of life for tens of thousands of people being treated for diabetic macular edema in the United States each year,” according to Paul A. Sieving, M.D., Ph.D., director of the NEI. Only diabetic macular edema was examined as part of this study. Macular edema from conditions other than diabetes may respond to corticosteroid treatment and laser treatment differently.

The corticosteroid-treated group was also far more likely to experience side effects. In fact, 51 percent of the corticosteroid-treated group had cataract surgery compared to 13 percent of those in the laser-treated group. In addition, almost half of the corticosteroid-treated group had increased eye pressure, which may lead to glaucoma. One-third of this group needed eye drop medications to lower their eye pressure. The laser-treated group had significantly less of a problem with eye pressure, as 8 percent of the group required eye drop medications.

- National Eye Institute, National Institutes of Health
Tea & Conversation with Dr. Suleiman Alibhai

“Maximizing Your Independence: An Update”

Thursday, November 20
1:30 - 3 p.m.

Charles E. Beatley, Jr. Central Library
5005 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22304

For more information, call POB at (202) 234-1010.
November is National Diabetes Month
Learn about diabetes and vision loss

Wednesday, November 19
1:30 p.m.
“Diabetes and Your Eyes”
Lisa Collea, M.D.
Sibley Memorial Hospital
Renaissance Building

Thursday, November 20
1:15 p.m.
“Don’t Go Blind to Diabetes”
Stephen Pappas, Jr., M.D.
Holiday Park Multiservice Senior Center
3950 Ferrara Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20906

For more information, call POB at (202) 234-1010.
Save the Date

December 9: Low Vision Support Group, Washington Hospital Center, Eye Clinic, 11 a.m.

Share Group, Falcon's Landing, 2 p.m.

December 13: Macular Degeneration Network, "Ready, Set, Relax: Stress Management and Macular Degeneration," Sibley Memorial Hospital, 10 a.m., First Connection, 9:30 a.m.

December 16: Low Vision Lunch and Learn, Friendship Heights, 12:30 p.m.

December 17: Touch Tour & Share Group, National Gallery of Art, East Building, 2 p.m.

Senior Center, 1:15 p.m.
December 18: Aging Eye Network, Holiday Park Multiservice Center, 10:30 a.m.

December 19: Low Vision Support Group, Washington Hospital Center, Eye Clinic, 11 a.m.

To receive E-mail reminders about upcoming events, please send an E-mail to jheilman@youreyes.org.