

# CLEAR TALK

A NEWSLETTER FROM GRUTZMACHER, LEWIS & SIERRA

FALL 2011

## A HEARTFELT THANK YOU!

Dear Dr. Lewis and Staff,

I cannot adequately show or express my gratitude for the recent cataract surgeries on both of my eyes. It has been over 5 weeks now since the first surgery and just 3 weeks since the second one.

I still wake every morning and look across the room and out the windows, seeing clearly, and feel amazed by how miraculous this process has been. To see

*"As an artist, seeing color is essential to what I do."*

instantaneously after surgery is hard to describe to anyone who hasn't known the limitation of cataracts. You know your eyesight had slowly gotten worse, but we are amazing creatures in our ability to adjust.

As an artist, seeing color is essential to what I do. It has been like standing in the fog and having a sudden breeze quickly clear it all away to reveal a beautiful sunshine-filled day. As I look at the colors of everything, I am filled with gratitude and joy. My own work has come alive again as I see the colors fully. I thought my work had grown somewhat dull, but it was only my eyes that had grown dull.

We live in the middle of our lovely walnut farm near the Sutter Buttes. I love being here. The clarity of my vision is truly



*Cheryl creates gorgeous, colorful silk scarves.\**

astounding and I stop many times each day to just appreciate the gift by enjoying the view. We love to travel and I cannot wait to see our next destination with my new sight.

Thank you, Dr. Lewis, for all the careful monitoring of my eye health by you and your staff, and for this wonderful outcome. I pray you feel as rewarded by what you do as I do by what you did.

Sincerely and with heartfelt gratitude,

*Cheryl*

*\*(Read Cheryl's complete letter and view color photos of her art on our website)*

## Top 6 Tips to Safeguard Vision

- 1. Don't Smoke!** What you take into your body affects your whole body, including your eye health. Tobacco smoking is directly linked to many adverse health effects, including age-related macular degeneration (ARMD) and Cataracts.
- 2. Eat Right!** Vitamin deficiency can impair retinal function. The belief that eating carrots improves vision has some truth, but a variety of vegetables, especially leafy green ones, should be an important part of your diet.
- 3. Get a baseline eye exam** – Adults with no signs or risk factors for eye disease should get a baseline eye disease screening at age 40 — the time when early signs of disease and changes in vision may start to occur. The results will determine intervals for follow-up exams. Anyone with any eye symptoms or systemic disease should see an ophthalmologist to determine

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DRS. LEWIS, SIERRA,  
GRUTZMACHER & ROBINSON

## ROLE OF TESTING IN GLAUCOMA

From Dr. Richard Lewis

**W**hen they come to us for office visits, our glaucoma patients are generally most concerned about the level of pressure in their eyes. All of our therapy, both with medications and surgery, is directed at lowering this pressure.

In our exams, however, we are also determining how the eyes are maintaining function. This is done with the Visual Field exam. This test, performed at least once a year, provides information about whether our pressure lowering therapy is effective. Loss of visual field suggests that the

therapy is not working optimally and alternative treatment may be necessary.

Another important test obtains an image of your optic nerve. During your first visit, we establish a baseline optic nerve image with a test called an OCT (short for Spectral Domain Optical Coherence Tomography). We then repeat the exam annually to make sure that the loss of optic nerve tissue is minimized.

These and other tests play a critical role in the prevention of visual loss from glaucoma.

## APPS FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

**I**t has been said that technology has made the world smaller, but for those with poor vision, iDevices are opening up a whole new world. Now, with the aid of an iPhone, the visually impaired can virtually see color, light, paper money and much more. An AppList (including: Look Tel Money Reader; Color ID Free, Light Detector and Voice Brief) highlights some of the most innovative and entertaining apps available to the vision impaired. There are even some exceptional games for the visually impaired to relax with. For the complete list of 23 apps go to: <http://appadvice.com/applists/show/apps-for-the-visually-impaired>.

## WHAT'S STATE-OF-THE-ART LASIK TODAY?

From Dr. Richard Grutzmacher

**M**ost surgical procedures are in the process of constant change. LASIK surgery continues to evolve quickly with many advances over the last fifteen years. So what is state-of-the-art LASIK surgery today?

In the past, a razor blade instrument called a microkeratome was used to create the thin corneal flap. Although LASIK complications with this system were and are rare, some flaps may turn out too thin, too thick, incomplete or defective.

Current LASIK involves an all laser approach with one laser used to make the flap and another to reshape the cornea. The Intralase laser can create a much safer, more consistent flap. Yes, it costs a little more, but it's well worth it. Typical Intralase LASIK flaps have minimal variation and are much safer. The excimer lasers have changed dramatically too. Wavefront optimized excimer laser



*Drs. Grutzmacher & Robinson stop for a photo-op!*

by Allegretto (Wavelight Allegretto) and the VISX Star S4 customized laser utilize peripheral ablation patterns to improve night vision.

Patients' results are now entered into our Datalink Nomogram software database that allows constant refinement in the laser programming. It's analogous to fine tuning a racecar.

## STAFF UPDATE

### Welcome!

The next time you are in for an appointment join us in welcoming Juana and Sophia to our staff.

**J**uana recently joined our practice as an ophthalmic technician. She brings with her over 10 years of eye experience, the past 3 ½ years were spent at a busy ophthalmology practice. Juana, fluent in Spanish, has been a great addition to our team, easily transitioning to the volume and variety of patients we see and care for. In her spare time, she plays with her 3 dogs and enjoys being active outdoors. Welcome, Juana!



**S**ophia also recently joined our practice as an ophthalmic technician. She brings over 16 years experience in the medical field, the past four years as a retinal photographer. Sophia has been a huge asset to our team with her technical and patient care skills. She spends her time away from the office enjoying her family and friends... and baking! Yum! Welcome, Sophia!



### Get on our email list and check out our new website!

To receive news and updates from our office, join our email program. Send an email to [JaimeP@eyelasik.com](mailto:JaimeP@eyelasik.com)

and we will add you to our e-files. *As with any personal information you give us, we will protect your privacy.*

Learn more about eye health, conditions, surgical procedures and our doctors, visit our newly redesigned website: [www.eyelasik.com](http://www.eyelasik.com)

# BLEPHAROPLASTY

From Dr. Jonathan Perlmann

Your eyes tell a lot about you. They can say you look youthful and well rested, or they can say you look tired, old and sad. Upper eyelid blepharoplasty is a surgical procedure that can restore a more youthful, well-rested appearance.

As we age, so do our eyelids. Due to the effects of gravity, heredity, poor skin quality or care, the sun and perhaps diet, the skin and tissues around the eye begin to loosen and relax. Over time, sagging occurs from the force of gravity pulling on the eyelid tissues. Changes and weakening occur in the septum below the skin, which normally prevents the fatty tissue around the eye from protruding forward.

Cosmetic blepharoplasty is commonly performed in our office operating suite under local anesthesia. Patients can be given medication to relax prior to procedure. Markings are created between the skin folds of the upper eyelid which makes for little, if any, visible scar. The Procedure usually lasts about an hour and a half. Five to seven days later, the sutures are removed. It is my experience



Before an upper eyelid blepharoplasty



After an upper eyelid blepharoplasty

that most patients have little bruising left by a week after the surgery, but everyone heals differently. The results of your surgery will improve over the first few months as the last subtle amounts of swelling fully resolve.

Most patients report that they had little, if any, pain during the procedure and that it was much easier than they expected. Stay tuned to our next newsletter which will review cosmetic lower eyelid blepharoplasty.

## More Reasons to Eat a Diet High in Fruits, Veggies & Fish

**Age-Related Macular Degeneration** (ARMD), is an eye disease and a leading cause of vision loss in people 65 years and older. ARMD affects around 10 million Americans.

There are two kinds of ARMD, wet and dry. There is no cure for either, but there are promising treatments for the less common and more destructive, wet type. According to a recent national 10 year study, *Age-Related Eye Disease Study* (AREDS), supplemental antioxidants\* were shown to reduce the risk of ARMD, or slow it's progression in some by 25 percent.

Further research is being conducted regarding lutein, zeaxanthin, and omega-3 fatty acids. The initial findings are hopeful and the world's leading eye care professionals are increasingly convinced these are vital to maintaining eye health.

So round out your diet with foods rich in Omega-3, found in dark fruits and veggies, nuts and fish, and eat colorful fruits and veggies for extra antioxidant power.

### Omega-3 Sources

(3 1/2 -ounce serving)

Sardines packed in water	-----3.0 grams
Mackerel	-----2.5 grams
Pink Salmon	-----2.2 grams
Tuna	-----2.1 grams
Shark	-----1.9 grams
Herring	-----1.6 grams
Atlantic Salmon	-----1.4 grams
Sablefish	-----1.3 grams

\*The specific dietary supplement formula studied in the AREDS was: 500 mg of vitamin C; 400 IU of vitamin E; 15 mg of beta-carotene (often labeled as equivalent to 25,000 IU of vitamin A); 80 mg of zinc as zinc oxide; and 2 mg of copper as cupric oxide. Copper

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how frequently your eyes should be examined.

**4. Know your family history.** Many eye diseases cluster in families, so you should know your family's eye disease history because you may be at an increased risk.

**5. Intervene early.** Most serious eye conditions, such as glaucoma and ARMD, are more easily and successfully treated if diagnosed and treated early. Left untreated, these diseases can cause serious vision loss and blindness. Early intervention now will prevent vision loss later.

**6. Know your eye care provider.** When you go to get your eyes checked, there are a variety of eye care providers you might see. Ophthalmologists, optometrists and opticians all play an important role in providing eye care services to consumers, however, each has a different level of training and expertise. Make sure you are seeing the right provider for your condition or treatment. Ophthalmologists are specially trained to provide the full spectrum of eye care, from prescribing glasses and contact lenses to complex and delicate eye surgery.

*was added to the AREDS formulations containing zinc to prevent copper deficiency anemia, a condition associated with high levels of zinc intake. You should check with your primary care doctor before beginning any new medicine or supplement.*

Taken from: *Food Smart: A Nutritional Atlas*; Laura Pawlak, PhD R.D. and Lisa Turner; 2000, pg 125



## ROATAN & THE HONDURAS CORNEA PROJECT

Last June, Dr. Patricia Sierra was invited to share her corneal transplantation experience with Honduran ophthalmologists at the VIII National Honduran Congress, which took place on the Island of Roatan.

Roatan is a small island off the Atlantic coast of Honduras, known for its barrier reef (second largest worldwide after Australia's Great Barrier Reef and a world renowned scuba diving destination).

Dr. Sierra discussed the newer corneal transplantation techniques, known as lamellar keratoplasties. These procedures offer multiple advantages over traditional corneal transplantation including a safer surgery and less risk of complications such as rejection and failure, as well as a faster visual recovery.

Thanks to the Alabama Eye Bank and Sierra Eye & Tissue Donor Services in Sacramento, we have sent over 100 corneas



*Dr. Patricia Sierra speaks about corneal transplantation at the VIII National Honduran Congress*

for transplantation to Honduras, helping hundreds of patients with severe visual loss regain their precious vision.

We appreciate your interest and support with this project and hope that we can continue to help those in most desperate need.

## FSA can help your Vision

A Flexible Spending Arrangement (FSA), or Flexible Spending Account, as they are commonly called, is one of a number of tax-advantaged financial accounts that can be set up through your employer. It allows you to set aside a portion of your earnings to pay for qualified expenses before taxes.

This is an excellent way to save on iLASIK or Premium Intra-ocular (IOL) Lenses during Cataract surgery. Do your homework and save on the cost of the procedure AND decrease your need for future prescription glasses and contact lens purchases! Ask your employer during benefits enrollment to set up your FSA. Then come into our office to see if you are a candidate for iLASIK or Premium IOLs.

**Latisse and Botox Specials!**  
Latisse – Buy One, Get One Free (while supplies last)  
Get a Free Latisse with any Botox Treatment (while supplies last).  
Offer ends on December 31, 2011

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& Lewis  
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If you no longer wish to receive Clear Talk, please call our office (916 649-1515) or email [JaimeP@eyelasik.com](mailto:JaimeP@eyelasik.com).

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