

Glaucoma Research Society of Canada News & Information



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We Support New Ideas

In this Special Issue Dr. Rajiv Bindlish Answers More of Your Questions about Glaucoma



How many times a day are Timolol eye drops recommended?

Generally, regular Timolol 0.5 % drops are recommended for twice daily use. The gel forming type is once daily, but because the drop is thicker in consistency, this may cause visual blur.

Over time research has shown that once daily T1/2 (non gel forming) can last up to 24 hours. Some ophthalmologists have therefore advocated using the drops once daily. If this is something you want to try, I recommend rechecking the eye pressure in the late evening after morning administration to ensure a prolonged effect of the drug.

Do you give sedation when performing a laser treatment?

Generally, we don't give a sedative for a laser procedure. We need the patient to be co-operative and not move. With a sedative, you may become drowsy and your head may fall back from the laser causing injury. Talk it over with your surgeon.

I have noticed darkening of my eyelashes. Is this a side effect of my glaucoma medications?

Darker, thicker eyelashes are a common side effect of all Prostaglandin medications – Lumigan, Xalatan and Travatan. There is no way to avoid this. It does reverse itself once you stop the medication but it can take a few months to return to normal.

Some people also notice some darkening of the skin around their eyes. You can minimize this by avoiding skin contact. Put the drop in about an hour before you go to bed, gently wipe around the eye with a damp tissue and rinse your eyes just before bedtime.

Questions about Glaucoma?

Email your questions for Dr. Bindlish to
info@glaucomaresearch.ca

or call

416-483-0200 1-877-483-0204

President's Message



I am pleased to let members know that the Glaucoma Research Society of Canada has, this year, funded eight research projects from across Canada,

totaling \$122,000! You can read about these exciting projects in the attached insert to this newsletter.

The Board and I sincerely thank you, our members, whose generosity made these grants possible.

I extend a welcome to all new members who have joined the Society in the past year and also to Louis Devor who recently joined our Board of Directors.

In May the Society participated in the Unique Lives lecture series featuring Jamie Lee Curtis at Roy Thomson Hall. Besides enjoying the lecture, donors also got to personally meet Jamie Lee Curtis at a private reception afterwards.

This event raised over \$15,000 for the Society. Our sincere thanks to Renée Wolf and Dr. Mark Shaffer for their hard work in making it such a success.

We also thank Renée for celebrating a memorable occasion and raising funds for glaucoma research at the same time. For her husband's 60th birthday, she invited friends to donate to the Society instead of giving gifts.

I want to let you know that your Board has written to the Ontario Minister of Health about current government cuts which will affect patient care especially in visual field tests.

Our volunteers, under the guidance of vice-president, Rick Gallop, have done an excellent job distributing our brochures to doctors' offices. These brochures have now been translated into French for distribution in Montreal.

We still need more volunteers, so if you are interested and can help, please let us know.

I hope you can join us at the upcoming AGM at 6 pm on Tuesday, October 16, 2012 at Vaughan House, the Estates of Sunnybrook. Please note the new location.

If you can't join us, please take a moment now to renew your membership to help support the valuable research work of the Glaucoma Research Society of Canada.

– Martin Chasson, President

Looking for a Unique & Memorable Gift to Mark a Milestone in Life?

Whether it's for a birthday, wedding, graduation, anniversary, bar/bat mitzvah or the passing of a loved one, a donation to the Glaucoma Research Society of Canada is a meaningful and lasting way to express your sentiments.

Your gift funds researchers working to find more effective treatments and a cure for glaucoma.

It's easy to donate over the phone, through our secure website, or by mail. We will send you a tax deductible receipt and a letter acknowledging your gift.

...Dr. Rajiv Bindlish Answers Your Questions about Glaucoma

The Canadian Medical Association recently published an article showing a higher incidence of inflammatory eye diseases – uveitis and scleritis – for users of osteoporosis drugs (oral bisphosphonates). Do these eye diseases worsen glaucoma?

Osteoporosis drugs have been linked with uveitis. Discontinuing osteoporosis drugs is usually the best management for uveitis.

The use of these medications does not directly cause glaucoma to develop or worsen. However, if someone develops uveitis, the treatment is topical or oral steroids. Long term use of steroid medications can cause eye pressure elevation and the development of glaucoma. This is less likely to occur if you are under the care of an eye specialist who monitors your condition.

During my annual vision test, my eye doctor discovered that I have two different sized optic nerves and the pressures are high as well. I don't think I did well on a subsequent field test. Any advice?

Diagnosing glaucoma can be difficult. Your doctor needs to consider a number of factors before making a diagnosis and starting treatment. He or she will take into account your eye pressure and its range over the day, what your optic nerves look like, how different the two of them are, and the visual field test result.

Don't worry if you didn't do well on the visual field test, as there is a learning curve and it may take three to four tests

to get better at it.

Your doctor will also consider your past medical history, as major surgeries, blood loss, and previous medications such as oral steroids, may influence your IOP or the look of the optic nerves.

If you do have glaucoma, remember there is no cure. The majority of cases are managed with eye drops, laser treatment and surgery. Treatment is individually determined.

What is the consequence if I mistakenly instilled two drops of the same type in an eye at five minutes apart?

If two drops go into the eye at the same time – either extra from squeezing the bottle or if you felt the first drop didn't get in – the eye will naturally get rid of any excess drops. Normal absorption of drops is during the next five to fifteen minutes.

The minimum five minute window is recommended for eye closure to minimize systemic absorption of drops and to prevent one drug from washing out the second drug if two different medications are required at the same time.

Adding a second eye drop of the same type five minutes later may not further lower eye pressure but can increase systemic absorption through the nasal lacrimal duct increasing the drug's side effects.

The big issue will be toxicity from the second eye drop – either allergy to the preservative or the medication, or eye surface irritation. There is also a greater chance of systemic side effects such as low blood pressure, low heart rate, and tiredness.

...Dr. Rajiv Bindlish Answers Your Questions about Glaucoma

How long does the eye take to properly heal after Trabeculectomy surgery?

Does the healing process differ depending on the age of the patient?

If further surgeries are required within a short period of time what concerns should the patient be aware of?

The recovery process for a trabeculectomy is about eight to ten weeks. (There really is no "healing" process involved as "healing" would indicate that the operation has stopped working and wasn't a success.)

Age can affect recovery. Younger patients tend to recover faster than older patients. Other issues such as previous eye medication use, quantity of medications and duration of use, and smoking can also affect recovery rates.

Usually, a second surgery in the short term after trabeculectomy is not necessary. Your ophthalmologist may, however, need to cut a stitch or "needle" the surgery site to keep it functioning.

For Information about the Glaucoma Research Society of Canada

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The Glaucoma Research Society of Canada is a national registered charity funding research into finding a cure for glaucoma. Since 1989, GRSC has raised over two million dollars for research.

Charitable Registration No 889178695 RR0001

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