

# Glaucoma Research Society of Canada News & Information



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*We Support New Ideas*

## Glucosamine supplements may increase glaucoma risk

A study of 17 people (average age 76 years) showed higher intraocular pressure (IOP) when participants were taking glucosamine. IOP returned to normal after they stopped taking the supplements.

Researcher, Dr. Ryan Murphy at the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine noted the possibility of permanent damage from prolonged use. He suggested monitoring IOP in patients using glucosamine supplements.

Previous studies have raised questions about whether glucosamine supplements provide any health benefit to consumers. A large recent study concluded it had no healing effect on arthritic pain.

- *JAMA Ophthalmology online, May 23, 2013*

## New study shows PGAs may cause droopy eyelids

Researchers noted that upper lid drooping could aggravate pre-existing visual-field loss. Prostaglandin analogues (PGAs) which are used to reduce eye pressure have already been reported to cause other eye lid changes, blurred vision, dryness and changes in eye colour.

Dr. Graham Trope says, "While droopy and other lid changes from PGAs are very unusual, these drops are highly effective in controlling glaucoma. Patients should continue to use them unless they have discussed the matter with their eye doctors."

- *Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, news release, May 21, 2013*



*The Society thanks Corey and Jonathan Shaffer for their fundraising efforts. Their lemonade stand raised \$76.10 for the Society. Board directors, Dr. Mark Shaffer and Sam Holtzman are proud grandparents.*

## Glaucoma, A Patient's Guide to the Disease – Fourth Edition

Dr. Graham Trope answers more than 180 questions about glaucoma, tests and treatments in the fourth edition of his popular book.

We received a limited number of these books. You can get a copy from the Society for just \$15. All proceeds from book sales support research grants.

Send your name, address and daytime phone number with a cheque, or MASTERCARD or VISA number and expiry date, to:

**Glaucoma Research Society of Canada  
1929 Bayview Avenue, Suite 215E  
Toronto Ontario M4G 3E8**

## President's Message



I am pleased to advise that the GRSC received a number of excellent research proposals and funded five projects this year for a total of \$75,000.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and myself, I thank our generous members and corporate donors for making these grants possible.

To increase donations, we are hosting two fundraising events this year. The Tealess Tea, a very popular fundraiser in the past, is once again headed by Vice-President Renée Wolfe.

Under the guidance of Dr. Mark Shaffer, Executive Secretary of the Board, the Society is also participating in the 2013 Scotiabank Charity Challenge, as part of the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon on Sunday, October 20.

I also wanted to let you know that the Society received a generous gift of marketable securities, which were sold and provided funds to the Society, and a donation receipt to the donor. This was an excellent result as the GRSC benefits, the donor saves income tax on the donation, but does not pay any income tax on the Capital Gain (excess of market value over the cost of the security).

We have recently received notice that the Society is a beneficiary in a will from a deceased member. We are now a beneficiary in six estates that will provide future gifts in accordance with the terms of the will, which could be on the death of other beneficiaries e.g. spouse.

Please consider making the Society a beneficiary in your will, and if you do, please let us know.

I hope you will join us at our Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, October 8, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. at Vaughan House, the Estates of Sunnybrook. I look forward to meeting you there.

If you cannot attend, please take a moment now to renew your membership. With your contribution, you can make a significant difference to help eradicate glaucoma.

– *Martin Chasson, President*

### 2013 Fundraising Events

The Society's very popular **Tealess Tea** fundraiser is in full swing. By now you will have received your invitation from our corporate sponsors to enjoy a cup of tea at your leisure and think about how you can help by making a donation to fund research into the causes, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of glaucoma.

Your support is essential to continue this valuable and much needed research, so if you haven't yet taken part, have your cup of tea now and donate today.

We are now registered with the **Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon** that takes place on Sunday, October 20. Support glaucoma research by registering for and participating in the full Marathon run or walk (42.2km), the Half-Marathon run or walk (21.1km), or the 5 km run/walk/wheelchair. Or you can sponsor your family and friends who have registered to run or walk for the Glaucoma Research Society of Canada.

We also encourage adult volunteers who are not running to join the Volunteer Team for various duties at the on-course water stations, the finish line and food stations.

Visit [www.torontowaterfrontmarathon.com](http://www.torontowaterfrontmarathon.com) for more information on registering for the race, to sponsor a runner or to volunteer, or contact the GRSC office at 416-483-0200.



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

**I have low normal blood pressure and low tension glaucoma. Recently, a blood vessel burst in the white of my good eye (only about 30% vision loss). The blood covered about half the eye (white part only). I was told by two doctors that there was nothing to worry about and that it would clear up in a couple of weeks. I had not suffered a blow to the eye; the blood appeared after I finished a strength training and aerobic workout. It took only three days for my eye to clear up. Should I be concerned?**

You had a subconjunctival hemorrhage. This can happen with coughing or sneezing and is also associated with the use of blood thinners such as Aspirin or Coumadin. Most are of no concern, resolve in about a week, and have no effect on your glaucoma.

**CTV reported on a new technique – placing a small stent in the eye to relieve pressure build-up. How do I go about getting my mother evaluated for this new treatment by a surgeon experienced in this procedure?**

Talk to your mother's doctor for a referral to a surgeon doing iStents. Your mother needs to be evaluated to see if she is a candidate for the surgery. The evaluation will examine the status of the internal eye drain, whether it is open or closed, and the amount of glaucoma present – mild, moderate, severe.

iStent is a new procedure with no proven track record beyond two years. It may eliminate the need for some eye drops. iStent works best in mild to moderate glaucoma.

It is best to combine iStent insertion with cataract surgery. The biggest issue is the cost of \$500/stent. OHIP does not cover this cost so it may not be available in some hospitals and there may be patient pay models.

**CTV recently reported a cutting edge procedure that involves implanting a tiny stent into the eye to give glaucoma patients new hope. Is this a process that glaucoma patients should consider when facing cataract surgery?**

Some patients may be candidates for iStent during cataract surgery. It is indicated for early, mild to moderate glaucoma and may eliminate one or more glaucoma medications. Its main limitations are cost and lack of long term studies.

**Is the OCT test (which is covered by OHIP) as effective as the HRT test (costing \$75) for determining damage to the optic nerve? I want to take the appropriate test, but I also want value for my money if I do elect to take repeated HRT exams.**

HRT (Heidelberg Retina Tomography) and OCT (Optical Coherence Tomography) are different tests looking at different information.

OCT and HRT complement each other and can be helpful in determining if glaucoma is worsening.

HRT examines the topography of the optic nerve. Over time there may be erosion (damage to the optic nerve) which may be detected earlier with HRT than with a clinical exam. HRT has been around for many years and once an image is taken, it is always useful.

OCT is newer technology. For glaucoma OCT assesses the nerve fibre layer around the optic nerve and ganglion cell density in the macula. OCT may detect glaucoma earlier than any other test. It can also detect if glaucoma is worsening over time.

The current machines we use for OCT are about four years old. Unfortunately, images taken now may not be useful in a few years as technology advances and new machines are released.

**Email your questions about glaucoma  
to [info@glaucomaresearch.ca](mailto:info@glaucomaresearch.ca)**

**or call**

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

## Gifts of Life Insurance

*A powerful way for you to fund research*

Small annual premium payments treated as a charitable tax deduction can create significant gifts in the future.

You can make a gift of an existing policy or purchase a new one naming the GRSC as owner/beneficiary. Gifts of an existing policy entitle the donor to a fair market value tax receipt, which can be greater than the cash surrender value.

### 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 letter acknowledging your gift and a tax deductible receipt.

### For Information about the Glaucoma Research Society of Canada

phone: 416-483-0200

1-877-483-0204 (toll-free)

e-mail: [info@glaucomaresearch.ca](mailto:info@glaucomaresearch.ca)

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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 three million dollars for research.**

Charitable Registration No 889178695 RR0001

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**Newsletter Editor: Linda Joyce Ott**