

# Glaucoma Research Society of Canada *News & Information*



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*We Support New Ideas*

## Patients Need to Learn How to Apply Eye Drops

Standard treatment for glaucoma relies on self-administering eye drops to lower eye pressure. But a new study reported in *Ophthalmology* in June discovered that more than half of people with glaucoma they observed struggled to apply eye drops properly – even patients who thought their technique was perfect.

The study videotaped about 200 glaucoma patients with impaired vision as they gave themselves eye drops the way they would at home.

Most patients had been using eye drops for at least six months, but when the researchers watched the videos, more than a quarter were unable to get a drop into their eyes.

And only about 40 per cent of those who could, administered the prescribed amount onto the eye without touching the bottle to its surface.

Applying either too few or too many drops could lead to insufficient treatment and faster progression of glaucoma. And touching the bottle to the surface of their eyes puts patients at risk of infection.

Patients over 70 years old were 60 per cent less likely to apply the drops successfully compared to younger patients.

These findings highlight the need to teach patients the best way to administer the drops.

The study's lead researcher suggests using a mirror, tilting the head back and placing the drop in the eye while holding down the lower eyelid. Family members may also help.

## You are invited to our 2010 Annual General Meeting

**Tuesday, October 19**

**CNIB, 1929 Bayview Avenue, Toronto  
Refreshments 5:45 pm**

**Business Meeting 6:30 pm**

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



Hear  
Dr. Darana Yuen  
talk about  
Exposing &  
Combatting  
the Silent Thief  
in the Night

Most types of glaucoma cause painless loss of vision with no symptoms early on. By the time someone detects visual loss, the disease is usually advanced and the visual disability severe.

Come find out more about this global problem as Dr. Yuen talks about the disease process, risk factors, diagnosis, treatment, cutting-edge research, and screening recommendations.

Dr. Darana Yuen completed her residency in Ophthalmology at the University of Western Ontario in 2009, and a fellowship in Glaucoma at the University of Toronto under Dr. Trope and Dr. Buys in 2010.

## President's Message



This year, your Board has awarded grants totalling \$180,000 to 16 applicants. Many thanks to our donors who make these grants possible.

We know that our donor dollars are put to good use to support essential research and have recently had more gratifying acknowledgement of this.

Gamal Seif, a student researcher, published an article: "*Impact of 10 years of Glaucoma Research Funding*" in the Canadian Journal of Ophthalmology (Volume 45, Number 2, April 2010). The article states that 66% of GRSC grants generated new knowledge in the form of peer reviewed publications.

### Board Members Hard at Work

During this past spring, the Board has completed several projects. Maria Wacyk, one of our vice-presidents, prepared a governance manual of administration and strategic plan, and a manual on chapter formation. We wish to thank Maria for her many hours of hard work on a job well done.

Your Board has been coming to grips with a review of our fundraising and marketing plans done by board member, Richard Gallop. Many thanks to Rick for his fresh insight into a new way of doing business.

By now, you should have received an invitation to our *Tealess Tea*. I urge you to give your utmost support to this event as it provides a major boost to the amount of research we can fund.

This event could not have happened without the hard work and dedication of our Vice-President, Renée Wolfe. Besides producing invitations for members, she approached corporate and major donors. Congratulations and thank you Renée.

None of this could have happened without Barbara Ulmann, our capable and hard working administrator, who with an injured wrist in a cast, single-handedly accomplished this mass mailing. Many thanks Barbara.

### Volunteers Needed

To be able to implement our fundraising, marketing goals and chapter formation, the Board needs volunteers from our members to serve on various committees. Please let the office know if you would like to be involved, especially if you have experience with other charities.

Please join us at our Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, October 19<sup>th</sup> where you can learn about the research we have supported and the business of your Board. You will hear leading ophthalmologists and have an opportunity to ask them questions about glaucoma.

I look forward to meeting you personally at the AGM.

– *Martin Chasson, President*

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## Eye Donations Needed

Information gathered from eyes with glaucoma can help researchers find a cure. But eye donations are rare, and donations of eyes with glaucoma, rarer still. For more information, visit the Eye Bank of Canada's website at [www.eyebank.med.utoronto.ca/](http://www.eyebank.med.utoronto.ca/)



## Dr. Rajiv Bindlish Answers Your Questions

### Do I have glaucoma?

Patients frequently ask their doctors the question "Do I have glaucoma?"

To reply, I need to do a complete eye exam as well as visual field testing. Additional tests such as HRT (Heidelberg Retina Tomography) and OCT (Ocular Coherence Tomography) may help me answer.

I often tell patients that to truly say one has glaucoma, we must document characteristic optic nerve head changes and/or visual field loss during the first exam or follow-up appointments. We must also see signs of worsening of the optic nerve or visual field over the follow-up period. It may take many years before changes are found.

### Are there any new therapies?

Some new formulations of existing medications are now available including:

- Travatan Z with a different preservative
- Lumigan RC where a lower concentration of the drug provides the same IOP lowering effect
- Azarga which combines Timolol and Azopt in the same bottle.

These various medications may either reduce eye drop side effects or reduce the frequency of eye drop use.

Surgically, new treatments include:

- the Express Shunt
- Canaloplasty
- Trabectome
- iStent.

All these surgeries aim to lower intraocular pressure and reduce eye drop use.

### Questions about Glaucoma?

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

Dr. Bindlish will answer selected questions in upcoming newsletters.

## Being Overweight May Protect Women from a Form of Glaucoma

Researchers at Harvard Medical School have found that overweight women may have a lower risk of developing primary open-angle glaucoma (POAG). They may be especially protected from a POAG variant called normal-tension glaucoma.

The researchers noted no association between BMI and the risk for POAG among men. – August issue of *Ophthalmology*

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***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.

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## 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 Glaucoma Research Society of Canada 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.

## Glaucoma – A Patient's Guide to the Disease 3rd Edition

Dr. Graham Trope answers more than 150 questions about glaucoma, tests and treatments in this book.

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 VISA or MASTERCARD number and expiry date, to the address below.

### For Information about GRSC

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**1-877-483-0204**

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**The Glaucoma Research Society of Canada is a national registered charity funding research into finding a cure for glaucoma. Since 1988, GRSC has raised over one and a half million dollars for research.** Charitable Registration No 889178695 RR0001

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**Newsletter Editor: Linda Joyce Ott**