

Glaucoma Research Society of Canada News & Information



Vol. 31 No. 1

Spring 2020

We Support New Ideas

U.S. Survey Reveals Glaucoma's Impact on Patients & Caregivers

Findings from a survey of more than 1,600 American glaucoma patients suggest that while determined to manage the disease, many worry about loss of vision and independence.

Besides the emotional impact of glaucoma, many of the patients surveyed struggle to effectively control their disease with only half achieving and maintaining their intraocular pressure (IOP) goal. They are also dissatisfied with their prescription eye drops. More than half of caregivers surveyed say caring for a person with glaucoma impacts their lives.

Overall, findings confirm that glaucoma has a daily impact on the majority of patients and caregivers - mainly because of issues caused by medication management and vision loss.

- This national survey was commissioned by the Glaucoma Research Foundation with support from Aerie Pharmaceuticals, Inc. The results were reported in September 2019.

SAVE THE DATE

**Annual Supporters' Meeting
Wednesday, October 7, 2020**

New Location

**The Toronto Lawn Tennis Club
44 Price St.**

**close to the Summerhill & Rosedale
subway stations**

**Check our Fall Newsletter & our website
for any change to this date**



Please Join
the Society
in Welcoming
Our New Office
Administrator

Suzanne Marshall

GRSC Streamlines Research Grant Application Process

Each year the GRSC calls for applications for funding from researchers across Canada. Independent peers review the applications under the guidance of the Society's Scientific Advisory Committee after which the Committee makes research grant recommendations to the Board.

Over the years, the online research grant process had become outdated, frustrating researchers and evaluators. As well, applications continued to be accepted through the mail causing delays and security and storage issues.

In 2018, the GRSC struck a committee - former GRSC administrator Barbara Ullmann and board members Stuart Murray and Dr. Catherine Birt - to design a more efficient, reliable and secure web portal for research grant applications.

The committee worked diligently with a web developer and launched its new web portal just in time for the 2020 research grant applications.

We are now part way through the process and feedback from researchers, evaluators and our office administrator is extremely positive.



Dr. Rajiv Bindlish Answers Your Questions about Glaucoma

Will a trabeculectomy work if one has sleep apnea?

Sleep apnea has no effect on a trabeculectomy. A potential issue might be that the pressure of the sleep apnea mask on the face could put undue pressure on the eye and damage the trabeculectomy site. But I have not come across any reports on this.

Studies have been inconclusive and contradictory about an association of sleep apnea with glaucoma progression.

I have glaucoma and need cataract surgery but am worried about the risk of infection.

The overall risk of infection after cataract surgery is less than 1%. Having glaucoma does not increase that risk. Managing dry eyes, *blepharitis*, and ocular surface disease pre-op may lower your overall risk of infection. Talk to your surgeon about this.

The greatest risk of infection after glaucoma surgery is with a trabeculectomy due to bleb formation.

iStent insertion is minimally invasive - usually through the cataract incision - and does not increase the risk for infection. Because there is no bleb formation, there is no increased risk afterward.

Which eye drops for glaucoma are gluten free?

All brand name glaucoma eye drops are gluten free. One caution would be the fillers used in generic meds which may not be gluten free.

I have been using Lumigan and Azarga eye drops for many years. Recently, I have been getting blurry vision and am seeing halos at night.

Ocular surface disease or long-standing glaucoma eye drop use can cause blurry vision. Most glaucoma drops contain preservatives, so that the medication is good for 30 days. These preservatives can irritate the surface of the eye and cause dry eyes which can cause your symptoms.

You might want to try preservative-free medications (Cosopt, Trusopt, Monopost) to help reduce ocular surface disease.

Cataract formation can also cause blurred vision. Even mild cataracts can give symptoms of glare at night. Speak to your ophthalmologist about these symptoms.

Can you provide an update on the status of stem cell treatment for glaucoma?

Stem cell research is in its infancy and encompasses a broad area of the eye. There are no approved stem cell therapies to treat any eye disorders at this time.

In glaucoma, researchers are looking at stem cells to restore the trabecular meshwork and retinal ganglion cells. So far, this research has been in animal studies only.

It is very difficult to reproduce stem cells that will grow along the glaucoma-damaged optic nerve from the eye back to the brain and go to the exact location in the brain where they will function and restore sight. This type of research is many years away.

**Email Your Questions
about Glaucoma to**

info@glaucomaresearch.ca

or Call

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

Brain Pressure Controls Eye Pressure

Neuroscientists at the University of South Florida have discovered that eye and brain pressure are physiologically connected.

By altering brain pressure in animal models, they noted changes in the fluid drainage properties of the eye that could be blocked by chemicals that eliminate feedback signals from the brain.

Their groundbreaking study shows, for the first time, a novel feedback pathway from the brain to the eye that modulates eye pressure. Its discovery offers a new target for glaucoma treatment.

Researchers are now trying to pinpoint the location of the brain cells that are sending signals to the eye and find which nerve fibers in the eye are being mediated by the brain.

- *The Journal of Physiology, November 2019*

Looking for Information about Glaucoma?

Check Out the Resources Page on Our Website

The GRSC office gets lots of questions about where to get information about glaucoma. A detailed list of informative sites is available in the Resource section of our website:

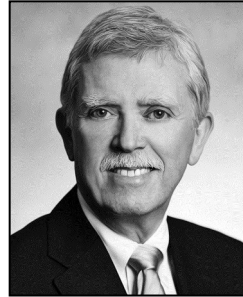
www.glaucotaresearch.ca

Two websites are especially good for patient information:

World Glaucoma Association's Patient Education Website -
www.glaucomapatients.org

Glaucoma Research Foundation in San Francisco - www.glaucoma.org

President's Message



The Society is having another successful year financially. It raised nearly \$56,000 from participating in the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon and has received generous support from donors, including bequests.

Thanks to everyone who participated in the Marathon along with those who provided financial support. This support enables the Society to carry out its mandate by funding research grants.

For the fiscal year that will end on May 31, 2020, the Society has received twelve research grant applications, which are currently being assessed. The successful applicants and the amounts of their grants will be determined around the end of April. The Society is extremely grateful for the ongoing generosity of its supporters.

At the Supporters' Meeting on October 16, 2019, recognition awards were presented to several volunteers and supporters. The question and answer session was a success, as usual, and the Albert Waxer Lecture delivered by Dr. Moshe Eizenman was well received.

Barbara Ullmann, who retired in June and Mary Ghazalian, the new administrator who replaced her, were both present. Thanks to those who expressed their gratitude in person to Barbara for her long and loyal service and welcomed Mary.

There has been a further change. Mary resigned in January and we are very pleased to welcome Suzanne Marshall as the new administrator and "face" of the Society, dealing with supporters and others.

Suzanne will attend the next Supporters' Meeting in the Fall, when supporters will have an opportunity to meet her.

- *James M. Parks, President*

Powerful Ways for You to Help Fund Research

You can support the Society financially, not only with cash donations, but with donations of publicly listed securities (to avoid recognition of capital gains), transfers or designations of insurance policies or registered plans such as RRSPs, RRIFs or TFSAs, bequests under wills and through other methods of giving.

You can give an existing life insurance policy or purchase a new one naming the Glaucoma Research Society of Canada (GRSC) as owner/beneficiary. Gifts of an existing policy entitle the donor to a fair market value tax receipt, which may be greater than the cash surrender value. They may also require the donor to report income for tax purposes.

You can also designate the GRSC as the beneficiary under a life insurance policy, a registered retirement savings plan, a registered retirement income fund or a tax-free savings account. In that way, the funds will be paid directly to the GRSC without passing under a will or through an estate.

Giving marketable securities eliminates tax on a capital gain and entitles the donor to a fair market value receipt. This is more tax efficient than giving cash after selling the securities. Donors should seek tax advice in connection with gifts of insurance policies or securities or by making designations.

Corporations can also make donations to charities. A donation of securities by a private company could save tax and provide tax benefits to the company which could be worth as much as 90% of the value of the donation. A donor who owns securities personally can transfer them to a private company [at no tax cost by taking appropriate steps to avoid recognition of any accrued gains] and the company can then donate them to the charity.

Please ask our office for details or consult with your tax advisor.

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

Charitable Registration No 889178695 RR0001

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Newsletter Editor: Linda Joyce Ott

For Information about the Glaucoma Research Society of Canada

phone: 416-483-0200

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

e-mail: info@glaucomaresearch.ca

write:

Glaucoma Research Society of Canada

1929 Bayview Avenue, Suite 215E

Toronto Ontario M4G 3E8

website: www.glaucomaresearch.ca