

# Glaucoma Research Society of Canada News & Information



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*We Support New Ideas*

## New Feature on Phone App Helps with Shopping

A new feature on **Google Lookout** – a free app for iPhone and Android phone users, says aloud the food item a person is holding. The app's database of about two million products works better on labeled items than on produce.

The app helps people with vision problems identify objects and texts around them. It uses feedback from visually impaired users to make improvements.

Other apps such as **Be My Eyes** and **NaviLens** also help people with vision problems navigate their surroundings.

– *BBC News Tech, August 2020*

## Seasonal IOP Fluctuation May Slow Glaucoma Progression

A recent Japanese study found that winter intraocular pressure (IOP) was higher than summer IOP in both healthy and primary open-angle glaucoma eyes.

– *Ophthalmology Glaucoma, November 2020*

### SAVE THE DATE

## Annual Supporters' Meeting Wednesday, October 6, 2021

GRSC's Annual Supporter's Meeting will be held online again this year. Please check our Fall Newsletter and our website closer to the date for details on how to register.



## Free Live Webinar Highlights World Glaucoma Week

To celebrate World Glaucoma Week (March 7-13, 2021), GRSC's Board member, Dr. Rajiv Bindlish presented **The Importance of Eye Drops: Tips, Tricks, and Instructional Lecture**.

This free live online webinar included information about eye drops and why they are so important in the treatment of glaucoma and a video showing the proper way to administer eye drops.

Dr. Bindlish also provided tips and tricks he's learned from his years of experience as an ophthalmologist. Following the presentation, Dr. Bindlish answered attendee questions live.

**If you missed the webinar, you can still see it on our website: [www.glaucomaresearch.ca](http://www.glaucomaresearch.ca) or request the video link by emailing [info@glaucomaresearch.ca](mailto:info@glaucomaresearch.ca)**

## Announcing Our New Webinar Series

We heard you loud and clear! Dr. Bindlish's webinar (see above) was so well received that we've decided to bring you more!

To receive email notification about upcoming GRSC webinars and events, send Suzanne, our office administrator, your email address or complete the back of the enclosed donation card with the requested information.

You can also check our website or Facebook page for updates.



## Dr. Rajiv Bindlish Answers Your Questions about Glaucoma

**I've read that Latanoprost can cause depression in some people. Since I've been using Latanoprost for glaucoma, my depressive episodes seem to be worse.**

I'm not aware that Latanoprost can cause depression or aggravate it. But all medications have side effects.

Check with your family doctor first to make sure your anti-depressants are working properly. If they are, you may want to try not using Latanoprost to see if the depression improves.

If you are considering not using eye drops for a trial period, make sure that your eye doctor carefully monitors your eye pressure.

**Are yoga breathing exercises harmful for glaucoma patients?**

Valsalva breathing exercises (holding breath with a forceful downward motion) can lead to increased eye pressure and worsening of glaucoma.

People with glaucoma should also avoid any yoga position where the head/eye is below the heart (e.g. headstands and downward dog) as this can increase eye pressure.

Relaxation and stress relief techniques may have a role in glaucoma but more research is needed to confirm this.

**What do you recommend as a follow-up treatment when a trabeculectomy fails?**

Your eye doctor may restart eye drops to control the eye pressure. Other options include revising your current operation, doing laser surgery or performing a new operation.

**Should I insert eye drops in a pouch at the lower eyelid or in the area of the pupil of the eye?**

The absorption is the same whether you place the eye drop in the lower eyelid pouch or directly on the eye.

Putting it directly on the eye increases the risk for a corneal abrasion as the tip of the eye dropper can hit and scratch the eye. It's best to insert the drop after pulling down the lower lid.

To see how to insert eye drops, take a look at my video, *The Importance of Eye Drops – Tips, Tricks and Instructional Lecture*, on our website.

**I have diabetes. How can I best protect against getting glaucoma?**

I recommend a yearly eye exam and keeping your overall health in good shape by controlling blood sugar and blood pressure.

Email Your Questions  
about Glaucoma to

[info@glaucomaresearch.ca](mailto:info@glaucomaresearch.ca)

or call

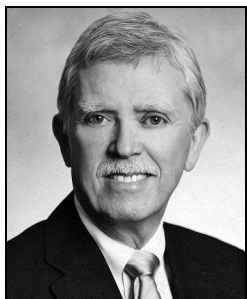
416-483-0200 1-877-483-0204



Glaucoma Research  
Society of Canada  
is on Facebook!

Please follow us on Facebook to keep up-to-date on the latest glaucoma research, to find out about upcoming glaucoma webinars and events, along with other Society news.

## President's Message



I am deeply saddened to report that Mel Mitzel, a director of the GRSC, passed away on February 4. Mel made a valuable contribution to the affairs of the Society and will be sorely missed.

Although the pandemic continues to affect the Society's operations on a daily basis, I'm pleased to report that we've been moving forward with virtual Board of Director meetings and several virtual public events.

About 60 viewers attended our virtual Annual Supporters' Meeting on October 7 and many more were able to view the meeting on their computers afterwards.

You will find highlights of the meeting on the enclosed insert and a recording of the meeting on our website. Thank you to all our supporters who tuned in.

On October 16, GRSC supporters engaged in a 5 km trek in North Toronto for the 2020 Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon raised over \$53,000 for the Society. This was most encouraging and I thank everyone who participated.

On March 9, over 125 viewers tuned in to see Dr. Rajiv Bindlish give a live webinar on *The Importance of Eye Drops – Tips, Tricks and Instructional Lecture*. After the lecture, Dr. Bindlish answered viewers' questions. If you missed the presentation, you can still see it on our website.

The Society is planning to hold more virtual presentations in the future. If we have your email address, we'll let you know about them. Otherwise, check our website for information.

After reviewing the 15 applications for 2021 research grants, the Scientific Advisory Committee will make its recommendations to the Board. We will notify applicants

about the results by May 31.

The Society requires a continuing flow of funds to support its mission of awarding research grants. We are grateful for the ongoing generosity of its supporters, including several bequests.

– **James M. Parks, President**

### Reading While Lying Down May Raise IOP Levels

A recent Spanish study compared the intraocular pressure (IOP) of people reading on their smartphones while in different positions. Researchers found participants' IOP to be higher while reading in a horizontal, supine position and lower while reading in an upright, seated position.

Their conclusion – to avoid IOP increments or fluctuations, glaucoma patients, along with those at risk of developing glaucoma, should avoid reading while lying on their backs. – *Journal of Glaucoma, July 2020*

### Exercise Intensity Affects Glaucoma Odds

A recent U.S. study found that increasing exercise intensity decreases the odds of glaucoma. Performing moderate to vigorous activity versus doing no activity decreases glaucoma odds by 95%. Standing or walking versus sitting all day decreases glaucoma odds by 58%.

The study involved 1,387 participants of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. – *Ophthalmology Glaucoma, June 2020*

### RETRACTION

A U.S. study suggesting that statins reduce the risk of open-angle glaucoma (OAG) has been retracted. The latest reports do not support the use of statins to reduce the risk of OAG. The study was originally reported in *Jama Ophthalmology* in May 2019 and noted in our Fall 2019 newsletter.

## 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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