

Glaucoma Research Society of Canada News & Information



Vol. 32 No. 2

Fall 2021

We Support New Ideas



Dr. Catherine Birt's Online Lecture

**Visual Field & OCT Tests:
What are they &
how do we do them?
a Success!**

284 people registered for and 176 people attended Dr. Catherine Birt's online lecture live on June 3, 2021. The event drew an audience from Canada and around the world.

During the webinar, Dr. Birt provided background information on the tests, instructions about taking and administering them properly, and followed up with a question and answer session.

The free live webinar was generously sponsored by:



**Dr. Birt's lecture was the latest in
the Glaucoma Research Society
of Canada's**



**Demystifying Glaucoma
online lecture series**



**If you missed it, you can still see it on
our website: www.glaucomaresearch.ca**

**or request the video link by email:
info@glaucomaresearch.ca**

Caffeine May Increase Risk for Inherited Glaucoma

A study from the UK found a link between glaucoma and caffeine – but only for those with a genetic predisposition for the disease.

Researchers found that greater caffeine consumption was associated with higher IOP and higher glaucoma prevalence but only for participants with the strongest genetic predisposition to elevated IOP.

While further study is needed, they suggest that people with a parent or sibling diagnosed with glaucoma consider limiting their caffeine consumption.

Ophthalmology - June 2021

Sleep Apnea & Glaucoma

Sleep apnea is associated with a higher risk of glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration according to two large-scale studies from Canada and the United Kingdom. These findings indicate that patients with sleep apnea might benefit from regular ophthalmologic examinations.

BMC Medicine - May 2021

Seasonal & Weekly Fluctuations in IOP Confirmed

Swiss researchers, using an implanted intraocular telemetry sensor on glaucoma patients, confirmed previously observed seasonal variations in intraocular pressure (IOP).

They found IOP to be higher in winter than in summer, and surprisingly lower on Fridays. The difference was small, less than 10%, but statistically significant. The reason for these results is not known.

British Journal of Ophthalmology - February 2021

President's Message



The Glaucoma Research Society of Canada (GRSC) has had some changes in our Board of Directors. Dr. Blair Fearon retired from the board and Dr. Cindy Hutnik and Alfred Kwinter have been elected as directors.

As noted elsewhere, Dr. Catherine Birt, presented a webinar on visual field and OCT tests followed by a live Q&A session. It was informative and well received by the 176 people who attended live. Allergan, an AbbVie company, generously sponsored the webinar. We are planning another webinar for Spring 2022 and will update email subscribers at that time.

In its fiscal year ended on May 31, 2021, the GRSC received a total revenue of about \$334,000 including donations and just over \$53,000 raised by participants in the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon. Audited financial statements for the year ended May 31, 2021 will be available on our website and at the Annual Supporters' Meeting in October.

The Society is changing its fiscal year-end from May 31 to December 31 to better align its records with research grant payments each year. This will result in a one-time adjustment of financial statements issued for the seven month period from June 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021. Full-year statements will resume thereafter.

Covid-19 continues to cause disruption. The directors continue to meet online and the Annual Supporters' Meeting will be held virtually at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, October 6, 2021. If there is a dramatic improvement in the Covid-19 situation before then, we may hold the meeting in person with virtual access for those who can't attend in person.

The GRSC plans to participate in the Marathon again this year. It's currently scheduled to take place virtually during the month of October. More information about the Scotiabank Marathon and the Annual Supporters' Meeting is set out elsewhere in this newsletter.

In 2021 the Society awarded a total of \$256,419 in research grants to 13 successful candidates. More information is set out in the attached flyer.

In recognition of the contribution of Mr. Mel Mitzel, a board director who passed earlier this year, the GRSC has created the annual Mel Mitzel Research Excellence Award, presented to the candidate with the highest ranking for a new research project and including an additional grant of \$5,000 over and above the amount requested.

The GRSC and its directors are grateful and thank all of the generous supporters for making the grants possible. With your ongoing financial support, the Society will continue to make a significant difference through its research grants.
– *James M. Parks, President*

Congratulations Dr. Yaping Jin & Dr. Yvonne Buys on winning the inaugural Mel Mitzel Research Excellence Award!

For receiving the highest ratings from peer reviews on their research project:
Did Delisting Eye Exams Result in Inefficient Use of Medical Resources?
Dr. Jin and Dr. Buys' received the first annual award of \$5,000 towards their research.

*Read about their project in the enclosed
Research Summary Report!*



**GRSC & Santen Canada Inc.
to present our
Annual Supporters' Meeting
as a Webinar at 7 p.m. ET
on Wednesday, October 6**

*Find out more on the enclosed
Annual Supporters' Meeting bulletin!*



Dr. Rajiv Bindlish Answers Your Glaucoma Questions

How can I control the amount of liquid expelled when using eye drops?

I suggest giving the bottle a squeeze and aim for one drop. Each eye drop has ten times more medication than you need. If you release more than one drop, any excess medication will spill out.

If you successfully administer one drop, don't apply a second. This lessens wastage and the possibility of side effects.

How can I limit the redness around my eyes from using eye drop medications?

Wipe away any excess eye drop medication immediately after application. If you apply drops before bedtime, do so about an hour prior, and wash the skin around your eyes. You can also try preservative-free medications.

Is there a way to measure peaks and lows of eye pressure over 24-hours?

An *Eye Care Home Tonometer* is a good device, but you need proper training on how to use it. Some clinics provide the device to their patients.

Can I use artificial tear drops for dry eyes if I have glaucoma?

Yes, just leave adequate time between the administration of the treatments to ensure that the artificial tear eye drops don't flush out the medications from the glaucoma eye drops.

What is the latest research on using cannabis to treat glaucoma?

Right now, cannabis is *not* recommended for treating glaucoma. Cannabis has two components: TCP, the hallucinogenic component, and CBD. It was thought that CBD lowers intraocular pressure (IOP) but studies have since found that TCP is the component that does so.

To consistently lower IOP, one would have to ingest large amounts of TCP – amounts that would typically make a patient constantly stoned. That's neither practical nor recommended for one's overall health.

I was reluctant to use a drug prescribed for a bladder problem as I read it could cause macular degeneration. Could it also worsen glaucoma? What about other medications?

Elmiron (pentosan polysulfate sodium) used to treat cystitis can cause retinal/macular toxicity but it has not been linked to raised eye pressure or glaucoma.

Medications that cause pupillary dilation can lead to angle closure and cause acute elevation of eye pressure in patients **with narrow angles**. Some medications used for psychiatric disorders, anti-allergy and other drugs can dilate the pupil and increase pressure in narrow angle patients. Always check the package insert for warnings of glaucoma if you have been told you have narrow angles.

Ask your doctor if you are at risk of narrow angle glaucoma. Having a YAG laser iridotomy or cataract surgery can protect against angle closure in narrow angle patients.

Email your questions about glaucoma to:

info@glaucomaresearch.ca

or call:

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



9th World Glaucoma Congress Held Virtually

From June 30 to July 3, 2021, more than 2,800 glaucoma researchers, experts and other professionals from over a hundred countries gathered online to share their latest glaucoma research findings.

Several members from the Society's research community including Drs. Ike Ahmed, Yvonne Buys, Karim Damji, Neeru Gupta, Jayme Vianna, and Yong Woo Kim, represented Canada.

The next World Glaucoma Congress will be held in Rome, Italy from June 28-July 1, 2023. For info, check their website <https://worldglaucomacongress.org/>

Glaucoma Research Society of Canada to participate in its biggest annual fundraiser in October!



Scotiabank TORONTO
WATERFRONT MARATHON

Our goal is to raise \$60,000 in the Marathon. All money raised will go to funding glaucoma research
See the enclosed flyer for more details!

It's Easy to Donate to Your Society

Use our online donation page to make a tribute gift to a special person or in their memory. We'll send an eCard on your behalf. You can also set up regular monthly contributions to the Society online.

If you prefer, contact Suzanne at (416) 483-0200 or 1-877-483-0804 info@glaucomaresearch.ca to make a tribute gift or to set up monthly donations.

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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