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Supported by an educational grant from The Allergan Foundation

WWW.GLAUCOMA.ORG
Indeed, you can take the test at home. In my clinic, we have successfully trained patients over video calls to take a VR-based visual field test at home, thereby bypassing the need of my patients to come to clinic for their testing. And, because the test is taken in a virtual reality environment, you do not need to take the test in a dark room. Furthermore, most VR visual field tests being developed allow testing of both eyes simultaneously, which permits a more comfortable testing experience for the patient.

“Once a patient undergoes successful training in the use of a Virtual Reality headset, a technician’s help is no longer needed. Indeed, you can take the test at home.”

To date there are no VR visual field tests that are considered the “standard of care,” meaning that clinician-scientists are still conducting studies to demonstrate evidence that VR visual field tests can be used to diagnose and monitor glaucoma. This is an important hurdle to cross; however, I am very optimistic that, in the future, VR visual field tests will become an important assessment tool and will have many applications, including testing in remote locations, testing bedridden patients, and home testing.

VYONNE OU, MD

Yvonne Ou is an Associate Professor, Vice Chair for Postgraduate Education, and Academic Director of the Glaucoma Division in the Department of Ophthalmology at UCSF. The research interests of the Ou laboratory are in the area of neurodegeneration and neuronal plasticity in glaucoma, with an eye for improving diagnostic and treatment modalities for patients, including virtual-reality visual field tests.
Catalyst for a Cure — the Collaboration Continues

The goal of the Catalyst for a Cure Vision Restoration Initiative is to explore and develop novel strategies to protect, repair and even replace lost retinal nerve cells and help them reconnect with the visual brain. In this article, the CFC principal investigators report on their latest challenges and progress to date.

YANG HU, MD, PHD  “The shelter in place order created problems for our research program initially. But with moral and scientific support from the Catalyst for a Cure consortium, we adapted to the ‘new normal’ quickly to communicate more often, generate new collaborations, and restart our planned experiments once the situation permitted. We continue to be optimistic about the progress and impact of our collaborations in neuroprotection and regeneration.”

XIN DUAN, PHD  “We are very excited about this opportunity and we appreciate the support, but we also have a time urgency to achieve our goal. To be successful, our goal of vision restoration requires research collaboration. At my UCSF laboratory, this CFC collaboration is allowing me to test a lot of new ideas that wouldn’t have been possible in the past. For example, we can now directly test neuroprotective and regenerative cues using the very best glaucoma research models available, and also translate the work to human glaucomatous conditions.”

DEREK WELSBIE, MD, PHD  “Working with the other three labs, so far we’ve been able to identify a set of genes that are involved in keeping retinal ganglion cells alive and allowing their fibers to regenerate. As a team, we’re working to improve that regeneration even further and aiming to transplant cells into the retina. We believe we’ve overcome a major challenge of keeping the optic nerve cells alive while re-growing their axons, something that was previously considered not possible to do.”

ANNA LA TORRE, PHD  “Because of our work this last year, we are now in a unique position to advance the technologies for retinal ganglion cell replacement. We will test several experimental conditions with the goal of improving the efficiency of the cell transplants. Similarly, we will follow-up the molecular approach to protect the cells from degeneration and extend axons. And we will also combine these two strategies, treating the cells we are transplanting with the drug that we now know can protect the cells from damage and enhance the nerve growth. We’re hoping this approach will improve the transplantation efficiency, bringing us one step closer to vision restoration.”
**Q&A**

Dr. Prince answers questions about what to expect on your next eye doctor visit during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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**Q** How will my appointment be different?

**A** Prior to the appointment, you will be asked a series of questions such as whether you have been diagnosed with COVID-19, whether you have been exposed to anyone who has an active COVID infection, and whether you have any of the typical symptoms of a COVID-19 infection including fever, cough, shortness of breath, or some impairment of your sense of taste or smell. You may also be asked about recent travel history. If there is a concern that you may have COVID-19 infection, then the appointment may be rescheduled to a later date.

Once you get to the office, you will be interviewed again to see if you have any symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 infection. You may be asked to have your temperature taken with a non-contact thermometer and to wash your hands or scrub your hands with hand sanitizer before entering the office. You may be asked not to bring any family members or assistants with you. Every patient (and anyone accompanying the patient) is required to wear a mask, and the mask must be worn properly, covering both the nose and mouth. The mask must be worn through the entire visit, and conversations with the doctor or staff will be limited. The tests that are used to monitor glaucoma may be performed with modified protocols to minimize the time you spend at the office.

**Q** Will waiting rooms still be used?

**A** Depending on the office location, patients may be asked to wait in their car until the eye doctor is ready to see them. In major cities where patients may arrive by other means, this may not be possible. Waiting rooms have been modified for increased distance between patients. Shared items like magazines have been removed.

**Q** Why are all of these changes taking place?

**A** The number one reason for these changes is to protect the patient. COVID-19 is a very unique type of infection and can be deadly. Doctors want to protect the patient and staff while still providing the essential eye care a patient needs.

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Andrew Prince, MD is a native New Yorker whose practice is focused on glaucoma and cataract surgery. He has offices on the upper Eastside of Manhattan and in the suburbs of Northern New Jersey.
IN APPRECIATION

We are grateful for the generous and loyal support from all our donors. Following is a listing of recent contributions and pledges at the $1,000 level and above; including members of The Catalyst Circle and institutional donors. Please note these are new contributions and pledges received for The Cure is in Sight Campaign between March 1, 2020 and June 30, 2020 and will not reflect a donor’s cumulative giving for the year.

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Including Glaucoma Research Foundation in your estate or long-term philanthropic plans will ensure the advancement of innovative research and essential patient education programs. Your commitment will provide lasting support and lead us closer to finding a cure for glaucoma. You can plan a gift to benefit us today or after your lifetime, and often there are tax benefits for you and your loved ones. To learn more, please contact Nancy Graydon at 415-986-3162 ext. 231 or ngraydon@glaucoma.org with any questions.
November 7, 2020
New Virtual Event

Glaucoma Patient Summit

To ensure the health and safety of our attendees, the second annual Glaucoma Patient Summit will be presented as an online virtual event on November 7, 2020.

The virtual Glaucoma Patient Summit will highlight advances in treatment options and provide practical information to help you understand and live with glaucoma. Summit speakers will include leading glaucoma specialists, patients and caregivers.

Sessions and topics at the upcoming virtual Glaucoma Patient Summit will include:

- You Are Diagnosed with Glaucoma, Now What? — A Patient’s Perspective
- Glaucoma Overview: What is it? What causes it? How is it diagnosed?
- Current and New Treatment Options
- Promising Research on the Horizon: The Path to a Cure
- How to Be Your Own Advocate
- Living with Glaucoma: What you Need to Know
- Questions and Answers — Questions from our audience answered by Summit speakers and panelists

Learn more and register at www.glaucoma.org/summit
Thank you! Because of you the cure is in sight.

HISTORIC CAMPAIGN RAISES $25 MILLION

On June 30, 2020, thanks to more than 27,500 contributions, Glaucoma Research Foundation reached its goal to raise $25 million to advance innovative research and support essential patient education programs. This ambitious campaign was launched in 2014 to fund scientific discovery toward a cure and introduce new initiatives to inform and empower patients.

Thomas M. Brunner, President and CEO of Glaucoma Research Foundation stated, “We are so grateful to all the donors who joined us in this historic campaign over the past six years to advance the search for a cure for glaucoma.” In June, Mr. Brunner initiated a matching gift opportunity, the President’s Challenge, to close the Campaign.

He added, “This is an extraordinary and difficult time around the world, and it was incredibly heartwarming to receive these final gifts over the past few months of the Campaign. As our work at Glaucoma Research Foundation continues, this important fundraising endeavor brings us closer to a future without glaucoma, for everyone.”

This comprehensive campaign supported all research and education programs over the past six years and specifically funded:

- The launch of the Catalyst for a Cure Vision Restoration Initiative
- 48 individual glaucoma research grants
- Established the annual Glaucoma Patient Summit
- Introduced new patient education materials and a webinar and video series
Save the Date for Glaucoma 360 in 2021

The 10th Annual Glaucoma 360 will be hosted on a global virtual platform in January 2021.

Saturday, January 23: Glaucoma Symposia for Clinicians
Friday, January 29: Annual Gala
Saturday, January 30: New Horizons Forum

www.glaucoma360.org

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