



PRESIDENT'S DESK

Thank you for Record Attendance, ALLDocs Members!

Thank you to our loyal members who attended our annual meeting this past October in Phoenix, Arizona in record numbers! The Arizona Biltmore did not disappoint. The weather was amazing, the food was delicious, and the activities were a hit. But the best part was the warmth, camaraderie, and the engagement of the attendees. Our meeting continues to improve year after year; all thanks to our loyal members, sponsors, and partners. Thank you to the EssilorLuxottica team for participating and interacting with our membership. Mr. Alfonso Cerullo presented a fantastic update on the future of LensCrafters. We are all excited for what is to come.

As what has become expected at our meetings; the most impressive speaker lineup in the industry delighted our audience.

I would like to thank the following speakers for their most interesting and eye

opening lectures: Dr. Joe Pizzorno - Keynote Speaker, Dr. Laura Chonko, and Dr. Mark Marciano.

All lectures are available to view on the ALLDocs website: www.alldocsod.com

This year ALLDocs added two hands-on CE workshops: "Intense Pulsed Light and Radiofrequency for Dry Eye Disease Workshop" given by Drs. Krystina Lensky and Lisa Hornick, and "Scleral Lens Workshop" given by Dr. Shalu Pal. Members were able to use technology on the premises while learning about specialty fitting procedures and techniques. Both workshops were very well received. What will be added next year?

I already can not wait for next year's meeting at the luxurious Sanctuary Cap Cana Resort in Punta Cana!!

Registration opens in the Spring. This meeting will surely sell out so stay tuned for updates and be sure to register quickly!



The ALLDocs Board of Directors (left to right): Dr. Jack McIntyre, Dr. Kyle Sexton, Dr. Torrey Carlson, Dr. Kerry Gelb, Alfonso Cerullo (LensCrafters), Dr. Bill Fox, and Dr. Gretchen Brewer

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GALLERY



2025 Annual Meeting

Sanctuary Cap Cana

PUNTA CANA, THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

October 19-24, 2025



Exploring Therapies for Dry Eye & Demodex Blepharitis

Many innovations and new treatment options are continuing to emerge for patients with dry eye disease (DED), and several newer therapies are expected to gain FDA approval for the treatment of DED and Demodex blepharitis.¹

Looking at patients' eyelids is a great way to assess what are the potential root causes of DED and ocular surface disease.¹ The lids tell optometrists whether patients may be suffering from ocular rosacea, meibomian gland dysfunction, and/or blepharitis. Of note, the presence of collarettes on the eyelashes is pathognomonic for Demodex. Studies show that up to 58% of patients, or 25 million people, may have a Demodex infestation.^{2,3} Demodex can wreak havoc on our patients' ocular surface, causing redness, burning, irritation, dryness, and recurrent hordeolum.^{2,3} Demodex blepharitis needs to be managed to prevent these conditions.¹

Approved Options

In October 2021, Oyster Point Pharma received FDA approval for varenicline solution nasal spray 0.03 mg (Tyrvaya) for the treatment of the signs and symptoms of DED.² Varenicline is the first nasal spray approved for this indication and is the only dry eye medication that works by chemical neural stimulation through the nose.⁴ The nasal spray helps increase the secretion of natural tears, consisting of the mucin, aqueous, and lipid layers.¹ It is used every 12 hours, which is ideal for patients who are already using at least one eye drop, contact lens wearers, patients who wear eye makeup, and those who may have difficulty using eye drops due to dexterity issues.¹

One of the most recent DED medications to be approved is 100% perfluorohexyloctane (MIEBO; formerly known as NOVO3, Novaliq/Bausch + Lomb). This first-in-class drug was developed to treat DED associated with meibomian gland dysfunction and directly targets evaporation.^{5,6} This medication can stabilize the lipid layer for hours and penetrate the meibomian glands and essentially acts like a shield to protect the ocular surface.¹

Lotilaner 0.25% (XDEMVI, TP-03, Tarsus Pharmaceuticals) is a first-in-class therapy for the treatment of Demodex blepharitis. This therapy works by paralyzing Demodex mites, promoting the drug's uptake in the oily sebum of the hair follicle where the Demodex mites live.⁷



Another first-in-class medication is reproxalap (Aldeyra Therapeutics) for the reduction of ocular inflammation in DED by inhibiting reactive aldehyde species.¹ Topical ocular reproxalap has been studied in more than 1,800 patients with no observed safety concerns.⁸

An Eye Towards the Future

It has been well-established that the causes of DED are multifactorial, meaning patients may require several different treatment types to find a plan that is best suited for the person's individual needs.¹ With so many more options now available, it is truly an exciting time for optometrists to manage DED and Demodex blepharitis.¹ With these emerging treatment choices, more personalized therapy and management is more attainable now than ever before.¹

SOURCES:

- Hornick L. New drugs for dry eye and Demodex blepharitis. *Modern Optometry*. Published May/June 2023. <https://modernod.com/articles/2023-may-june/new-drugs-for-dry-eye-and-idemodexi-blepharitis?c4s-rc=article:infinite-scroll>.
- Tarsus Pharmaceuticals, Inc. presents data from two pioneering studies on the prevalence and impact of Demodex blepharitis at the American Academy of Optometry 2021 Annual Meeting [press release]. Tarsus Pharmaceuticals. November 4, 2021. Accessed July 12, 2024. <https://ir.tarsusrx.com/news-releases/news-release-details/tarsus-pharmaceuticals-inc-presents-data-two-pioneering-studies>.
- Shah PP, Stein RL, Perry HD. Update on the management of Demodex blepharitis. *Cornea*. 2022;41(8):934-993.
- FDA approves Tyrvaya for dry eye disease. *Formulary Watch*. October 18, 2021. Accessed July 12, 2024. www.formularywatch.com/view/fda-approves-tyrvaya-for-dry-eye-disease.
- NOVO3. Novaliq. Accessed July 12, 2024. www.novaliq.com/products/nov03/.
- Bausch + Lomb and Novaliq announce FDA approval of MIEBO (perfluorohexyloctane ophthalmic solution) for the treatment of the signs and symptoms of dry eye disease. Bausch + Lomb. May 18, 2023. Accessed July 12, 2024. www.bausch.com/news/releases/?id=156
- Eyes on Eyecare YouTube page. Accessed July 12, 2024. www.youtube.com/watch?v=JOGdOX7MTXo.
- Dry eye disease. Aldeyra. Accessed July 12, 2024. www.aldeyra.com/pipeline-disease-areas/ocular-diseases/dry-eye-disease/.

Identifying Factors for Higher CXL Failure Rates



Keratoconus is a progressively ectatic corneal disease that can lead to bilateral corneal stromal thinning and conical corneal bulging. When managing patients suspected of having keratoconus, optometrists are recommended to ask questions about the individual's history of eczema, asthma, allergy, and eye rubbing as a part entering case history. A study from researchers from Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia presented at ARVO 2024 in Seattle reinforced using this approach with, finding that allergy and topic disease were associated with a higher treatment failure rate of corneal crosslinking (CXL).

The study aimed to characterize rates of corneal CXL failure in patients with keratoconus using a large insurance claims database. Findings demonstrated that CXL failure was more likely to occur in patients with allergic or atopic disease (56.8% vs 40.0%, respectively). No significant differences were seen in failure rates by pediatric status, sleep apnea, or gender.

SOURCE

Hwang B, Pecsok M, Cheng BT, Lambert SR. Rates of failure of corneal crosslinking for keratoconus in the United States. ARVO 2024 annual meeting.

Guidance for Offering Ocular Aesthetics in Your Practice

Optometrists may consider adding aesthetics-related services and products for many reasons, and one of the most important is to increase practice revenue.¹ There are several steps optometrists can take to provide this specialty, including educating patients on eye health, offering in-office interventions, and bundling services and products.¹

1. Educating Patients on Eye Health

Informing your patients about the effects that cosmetic practices and procedures have on eye health may prime these individuals to hear about how they can safely continue using cosmetics. Optometrists can explain to patients the effects cosmetics have on eye health to personalize care.¹

When educating patients, discuss how to properly clean eyelash extensions. It can also be helpful to inform them on what not to do with eye makeup wear and care, such as:¹

- Don't sleep in eye makeup
- Don't use tight lining or water lining with eyeliner
- Don't use waterproof mascara or eyeliner

2. Offering In-Office Interventions

After patients understand the link between cosmetic practices and eye health, consider offering in-office products and procedures and tell patients these interventions should help them wear makeup safely. When recommending products, you can achieve patient buy-in using scripts that highlight both the problem and the solution. Additionally, explain to patients whether the interventions are free of toxic ingredients that can harm the eyelids or ocular surface.¹

Since dry eye disease (DED) is linked to cosmetic use, offer ocular hygiene products to keep the lids and ocular surface

healthy.¹ These may include artificial tears, lid and lash cleanser, a warm compress mask, an omega fatty acid supplement, and/or other lid hygiene products available, such as moisture goggles. It may also be helpful to provide patients with a hand-out describing environmental modifications, such as using ambient humidifiers.¹ Several procedures may benefit the function and structure of the eye safely, such as:^{1,2}

- Micro-blepharoexfoliation
- Intense pulsed light (IPL)
- Radiofrequency (RF) treatment
- RF with microneedling
- Injections and fillers

3. Bundling Products & Services

To increase the likelihood of your patients using ocular aesthetics products and services, it can be helpful to bundle them together.¹ Bundling can enhance the consumer's perceived value. In addition, improvement in DED using a series of treatments combining IPL, RF, and meibomian gland expression has resulted in DED symptom improvements in clinical research.³ Bundling treatment options for patients before they leave the office may improve adherence to the recommended treatment plan.¹

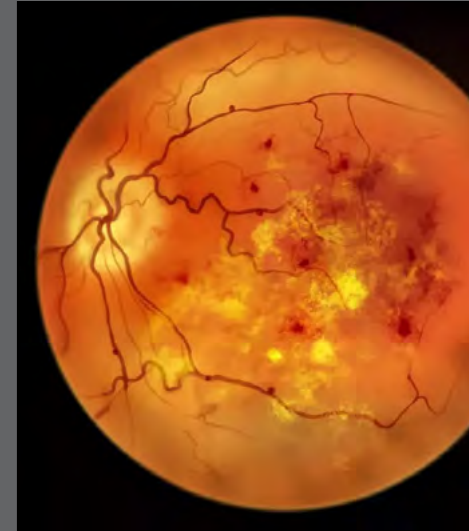
Getting started doesn't have to be hard. Be sure to check with your state board of optometry before offering any cosmetic or aesthetic technologies, products, or services to ensure you follow all appropriate state guidelines.¹

SOURCES:

1. Theriot PE. Offering ocular aesthetics in practice. *Optometric Management*. 2024;59:28,31,32,39. <https://www.optometricmanagement.com/issues/2024/june/ocular-aesthetics-for-optometry-practices/>.
2. Lim YK, Jung CJ, Lee MY, Moon IJ, Won CH. The evaluation of efficacy and safety of a radiofrequency hydro-injector device for the skin around the eye area. *J Clin Med*. 2021;10(12):2582.
3. Chelnis J, Garcia CN, Hamza H. Multi-frequency RF combined with intense pulsed light improves signs and symptoms of dry eye disease due to meibomian gland dysfunction. *Clin Ophthalmol*. 2023;17:3089-3102.



The Global Impact of Vision Impairment From Diabetic Retinopathy



Studies have shown that the prevalence of vision loss from diabetic retinopathy (DR) is continuing to rise across the world. An international research group has reviewed 137 studies and found considerable differences and sex inequalities regarding vision impairment from DR. Global estimates using 2020 data showed that approximately 1.07 million patients with DR were blind and another 3.28 million were diagnosed with moderate or severe vision impairment.

The prevalence of blindness and vision impairment was higher in women than men in the study. There were 611,000 women and 462,000 men with diabetes who had DR that resulted in blindness. Furthermore, 1.8 million women and 1.4 million men had either a moderate or severe visual impairment brought on by their condition. The authors noted their analysis provides an update on the worldwide and regional estimates for diabetic retinopathy-related blindness and moderate or severe impairment, including the changing patterns over time.

SOURCE

Vision Loss Expert Group of the Global Burden of Disease Study; GBD 2019 Blindness and Vision Impairment Collaborators. Global estimates on the number of people blind or visually impaired by diabetic retinopathy: a meta-analysis from 2000 to 2020. *Eye (Lond)*. 2024;38(11):2047-2057.

Assessing Optometry's Financial Health

Throughout the United States, optometrists may question their associated worth as practitioners for many reasons, such as increasing student loan debts, an ever-changing economy, and a profession that continues to incur disruption.¹ Recently, ODs on Finance conducted a large income and net worth survey of 912 optometrists.¹ While some findings on the profession's fiscal viability were promising, other areas need improvement.²

Gross Annual Pay

According to the survey, the gross annual pay earned by optometrists reached an average of \$155,000, with a median income of \$165,000. These data represented a substantial increase from previous publications, which have cited an average gross annual pay of around \$135,000 to \$140,000.³

Average Net Worth

The average net worth for optometrists in the ODs on Finance survey was \$872,765.¹ A different survey by The White Coat Investor found an average net worth of \$1,100,000 for optometrists.⁴ Net worth also increased with years in practice.²

Retirement Savings

The ODs on Finance survey also revealed that the average optometrist has about \$300,000 in combined retirement accounts, including 401(k), individual retirement accounts, and other taxable accounts.¹ Those with more than 21 years of experience had an average of \$1,200,000 in their accounts.¹ However, with inflation and rising costs of living, a conservative balance of \$2,000,000 should be the standard for optometrists reaching retirement age.² Based on the data, optometrists are not saving enough for retirement, meaning they may need to keep practicing longer than 65 years of age.^{1,2}

Student Loan Debt

Nearly 90% of optometrists reported having student loan debt upon graduation, and nearly half reported graduating with debt loads of more than \$200,000, with an average of \$230,000.¹ Alarming, 8% of optometrists reporting their debt as "over \$300,000" were recent graduates.¹ With such heavy debt, younger optometrists may also be prone to taking stable but unfulfilling roles just to pay off their debt and cover their living expenses.²



Ownership Is Key

Independent optometrists are vital to the profession because they keep large conglomerates and vision care plans from taking over complete control. A clear finding from ODs on Finance was that practice ownership yields the highest levels of compensation for optometrists.¹ The average gross annual pay for a practice owner was \$263,995 in the survey.¹ When the data were broken down by practice size and the number of associate optometrists they employed, the average income was more than \$400,000 for those who employed four or more associates and had a net worth of more than \$4,000,000.¹

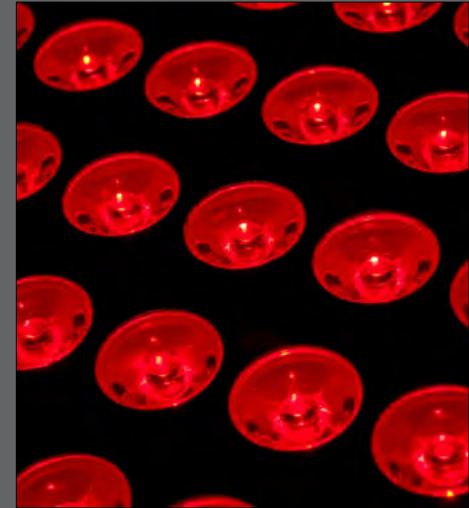
Hope Springs Eternal

Despite the issues that the industry faces, data show that the field of optometry continues to generate wealth. With disciplined financial behavior, optometrists can help create sustainable success in the future.

SOURCE:

1. Neufeld A. 2024 Optometrist Income Report. Published February 5, 2024. <https://odsonfinance.com/2024-optometrist-income-report/>.
2. Neufeld A. The state of optometry's financial health. *Modern Optometry*. Published April 2024. <https://modernod.com/articles/2024-apr/the-state-of-optometrys-financial-health?c4src=article:infinite-scroll>
3. Geller M. Average optometrist salary & calculator. *Eyes on Eyecare*. Published January 7, 2022. Accessed July 12, 2024. <http://www.eyesoneyecare.com/resources/optometrist-salary-calculator/>.
4. Dahle JM. Are doctors millionaires? The truth about the average doctor net worth. *The White Coat Advisor*. July 12, 2020. Accessed July 12, 2024. <http://www.whitecoatinvestor.com/physician-millionaires/>.

Red Light Therapy Increases Retinal Vascular Perfusion



Low-dose atropine and repeated low-level red light (RLRL) therapy have emerged as potential treatments for controlling myopia progression in children, but little is known about the efficacy of these options. To address this research gap, investigators compared changes in retinal vascular density (RVD) and retinal thickness (RT) after 6 months of treatment with RLRL and 0.01% atropine in 69 premyopic schoolchildren for a prospective randomized trial.

The study demonstrated that both RLRL and 0.01% atropine had similar effects on superficial RVD, but only RLRL was associated with an increase in deep RVD. After 6 months, both RLRL and 0.01% atropine groups showed significant increases in whole, parafoveal, and perifoveal superficial RVD. Regarding RT, the researchers found no significant differences between groups. The study group noted that more research is warranted to clarify the long-term effects and optimal treatment regimens for myopia control.

SOURCE

- Shang L, Gao S, Wang W, et al. Comparison of changes in retinal vascular density and thickness after using low-level red light and 0.01% atropine in premyopic children. *Transl Vis Sci Technol*. 2024;13(6):23

2024 Annual Meeting Highlights



ALLDocs members enjoying a float down the Salt River in Phoenix, AZ.



ALLDocs members taking in scenic desert vistas while horseback riding.



The Scleral Lens Workshop, hosted by Dr. Shalu Pal, was well received by ALLDocs Member Dr. Richard Winnick.



IPL Workshops hosted by Dr. Kristyna Lensky Sipes and Dr. Lisa Hornick, were very popular among the ALLDocs members this year!



Dr. & Mrs. Gelb at the 2024 ALLDocs Annual Meeting Gala. The theme for this year was The Great Gatsby.



ALLDocs members enjoying the Gala, dressed to impress in their best Great Gatsby attire!

Visual Acuity, Contrast Sensitivity Linked to Dementia



Visual acuity and contrast sensitivity appear to be linked to incident dementia, according to findings from a study published in the American Journal of Ophthalmology. Investigators conducted a longitudinal analysis to assess the association of worse baseline visual acuity and dementia likelihood in 2,159 adults from the 2021 and 2022 National Health and Aging Trends Study. Over the follow-up period, 6.6% (192) of adults developed dementia.

The research team noted that baseline distance and near vision and contrast sensitivity were associated with a greater likelihood of incident dementia. In addition, change in contrast sensitivity but not visual acuity was associated with even greater likelihood of incident dementia.

The findings suggest that visual function, especially contrast sensitivity, might be a risk factor for developing dementia. The study group reported that interventions targeted at preserving or improving contrast sensitivity may alter dementia risk.

SOURCE

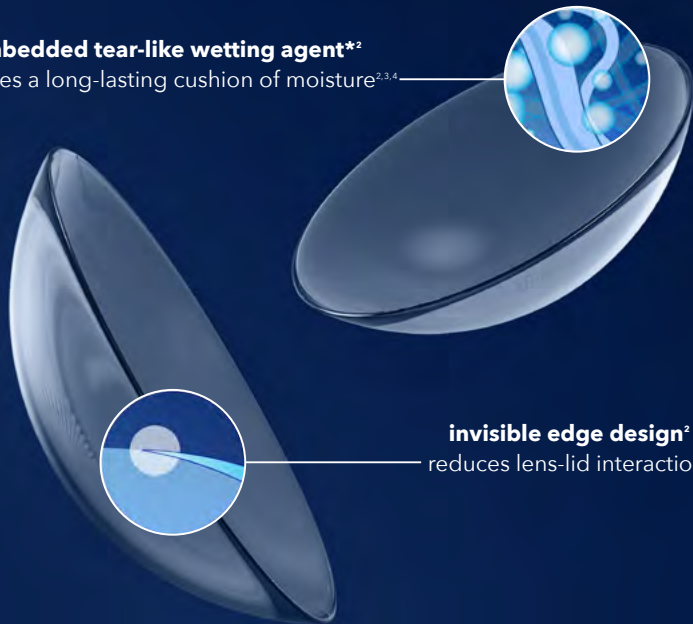
Almidani L, Mihailovic A, Varadaraj V, Swenor BK, Ramulu PY. Longitudinal changes in visual acuity and contrast sensitivity and incident dementia. Am J Ophthalmol. 2024 Jun 10;266:227-234.

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References: 1. JJV Data on File 2020. ACUVUE® Brand - Eye-Inspired Innovations. 2. JJV Data on File 2022: Master Brand Claims on Clinical Performance and Overall Material Properties for ACUVUE® Brand Soft Contact Lenses. 3. Sterner O, Karageorgaki C, Zürcher M, et al. Reducing Friction in the Eye: A Comparative Study of Lubrication by Surface-Anchored Synthetic and Natural Ocular Mucin Analogues. ACS Appl Mater Interfaces 2017;9(23):20150-20160. doi: 10.1021/acsami.6b16425. 4. JJV Data on File 2018: Similarities between Mucin and Poly(N-Vinyl Pyrrolidone) (PVP). 5. JJV Data on File 2022. Material Properties - ACUVUE® VITA® with HydraMax® Technology & other monthly, reusable contact lenses.

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Understanding the Dangers of Vaping to the Eyes



Vaping was first introduced in the United States almost 2 decades ago, but healthcare providers and researchers are still seeking to determine if vaping is a “safe” alternative to combustible cigarettes. According to an article published by the American Optometric Association (AOA), vaping can pose significant risks to the ocular surface by reducing the quality and stability of the tear film. Vaping may also contribute to the development of dry eye disease.

The AOA encourages optometrists to talk with patients about their vaping and/or tobacco use and the potential harm these products can cause to their eye health and vision. Users of e-cigs/vaping products should be educated on the potential effects vaping can have on the ocular surface. Throughout treatment planning and at every follow-up appointment, optometrists are urged to address potential ocular and systemic diseases and provide treatments to help reduce risks when appropriate.

SOURCE

American Optometric Association. Help patients understand the hazards of vaping to the eyes. Published June 12, 2024. <https://www.aoa.org/news/clinical-eye-care/public-health/help-patients-understand-the-hazards-of-vaping-to-the-eyes?ss=y>.



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