

New Advances in Eye Surgery

Treatment for pterygia, glaucoma and cataracts offers new hope for ophthalmology patients.



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A pterygium, also known as *surfers' eye*, is a growth that invades the cornea, causing significant foreign body sensation that frequently interferes with vision. Pterygia are a frustrating condition for people who suffer from them.

“People ages twenty to fifty, who spend a good deal of time in the sun, who do not wear sunglasses or brimmed hats on a regular basis, who have light complexions and light colored eyes, tend to develop pterygia more frequently than others,” according to ophthalmologist and fellowship-trained cornea and glaucoma specialist, Jason K. Darlington, MD.

In the past, pterygia were surgically removed from the cornea, and the affected area was surgically closed with sutures often times with donor corneal graft tissue placed over the surgical site.

“With a traditional surgical approach, the pterygium would recur approximately seventy percent of the time,” explains Dr. Darlington.

“My approach involves utilizing the latest techniques in cornea surgery, whereby I use autologous stem cell transfer – using actual stem cells gathered from my patient’s eye – to help the cornea heal safely and quickly following removal of the pterygium,” reports Dr. Darlington, who completed his fellowship under Dr. Thomas Samuelson and Dr. Richard Lindstrom at the prestigious Phillips Eye Institute in Minneapolis, Minnesota.



“One of the most noteworthy benefits of this approach to pterygium management is that the associated rate of recurrence declines markedly to only approximately four percent,” explains Dr. Darlington, chief of the cornea service at The Eye Institute for Medicine & Surgery.

“Irritating, uncomfortable and unsightly are adjectives that are commonly used by patients to describe their perception of having a pterygium,” he states. “It is my great pleasure to help relieve the discomfort people associate with having a pterygium. The fact that the vast majority of patients

who undergo this procedure under my care do not have their pterygia regrow is a wonderful benefit both to the patient and to the health care system.”

Help for glaucoma

A dramatic shift is starting to transform the practice of glaucoma surgery. While traditional surgical procedures, such as trabeculectomy, are demonstrating steady, evolutionary improvements, two new types of glaucoma surgery are moving interventional care from a last resort to front-line therapy.

The first procedure, known as the TRAB360, involves the use of a trabeculotome, a non-powered instrument intended for the manual cutting of up to 360 degrees of internal tissue known as the trabecular meshwork, in a procedure called a trabeculotomy.

The second procedure, known as the VISCO360, involves the use of the VISCO360 Viscosurgical System to facilitate the delivery of small, controlled volumes of viscoelastic fluid through a custom access cannu-

“For many people, receiving these lens implants creates a quality of vision that they may not have experienced in thirty or forty years,” Dr. McManus adds. “For such people, it is like turning back the hands of time.”
