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A Newsletter For Our Local Community

Omega-3 Fatty Acids May Lower Cataract Risk

Higher intakes of the right kinds of food may decrease the risk of nuclear cataract. This, at least, is the professional interpretation from the Blue Mountains Eye Study conducted in an urban community west of Sydney, Australia.

The key ingredient, as found by the researchers, in the body's increased ability to ward off cataract, is omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (n-3 PUFA). For those participants in the study who increased their intake of these, it seemed there was an association with a reduced incidence of nuclear cataract.

Researchers studied macronutrient consumption over a five year period and its correlation to the incidence of the three main types of cataract in older people. It is widely known that diet can cause or prevent disease generally, but to understand particular details of diet and specific diseases like cataracts could give individuals and their physician better means for preventing and treating these conditions.

Participants from the ages of 49 – 96 years were examined initially and then monitored over time to develop the results of this study. A lengthy questionnaire aided in the assessment of their baseline dietary habits as well as their innate risk factors for developing cataracts.

Once results were tabulated, it was found that of the subjects who were viewed as at risk for developing nuclear cataract, those with a higher

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Meet The Optician

Sandi Watson, Licensed Optician

Sandi Watson was born in Boston, Massachusetts, but since childhood has called the north Central Florida area her home. While growing up in DeLand, Sandi was introduced to the optical field and began delivering glasses to doctors for a local lab when she was just 18. Fascinated by the industry, she then learned to make glasses and joined the staff inside the lab.



After a time with that original firm, Sandi moved to another even more comprehensive optical company where, over a 26 year tenure, she rose to the level of District Manager overseeing all of the lab work, buying methods, selling procedures and general customer services. "This was all around priceless experience for me and I really learned what makes the business, the technical aspects and the people of a successful optical shop work", says Sandi in her upbeat, yet no-nonsense style. "Beyond the machines and the numbers, there are ways to make a lab run smoothly and efficiently," she continues, "with the net effect being a more pleasurable atmosphere for customers and employees alike." It's this bottom-line philosophy that seems to make Sandi such a good fit for the Total Eye Care Center way of providing care and services to valued patients.

Sandi's arrival at Total Eye Care Center was in the beginning of April, 2002 and she has been running the optical department at the Clermont location since. She is an optician with a wealth of experience and skills and combines professional practices with respectful care for patients every day. She emphasizes the benefits of a wide variety of lenses and frames and takes the time to answer questions and arrive at the right solutions for customers.

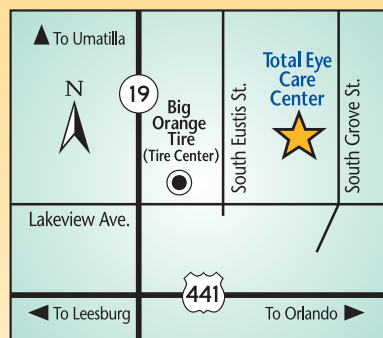
"The doctors and staff here are wonderful, and we provide the best vision care and quality available," explains Sandi. "Coming to the Total Eye Care Center optical shop was a great move for me as an optician and because of the patient care and products we provide, it's a great place for area residents to come to get properly fit for glasses and enjoy the best possible vision." ✨

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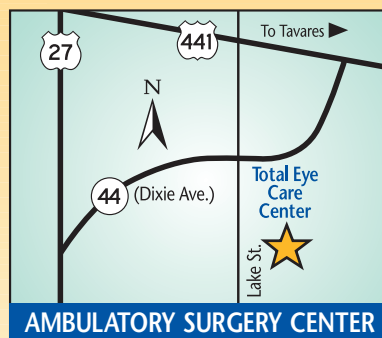
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The Total Eye Care Center Pledge To You

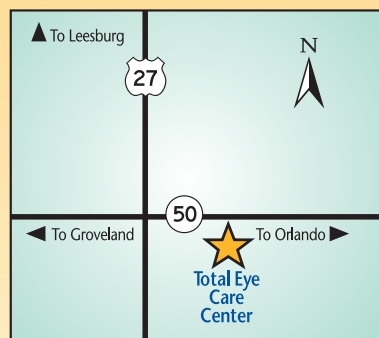
We see people – not just patients.
We see their interests and their talents.
We see their active lifestyles and the things they hold dear.
We see to it that people have the best in complete eye care, and access to the latest eye wear and optical services.
We see parents, children and grandparents.
We see the gardens, the creativity and the activities that represent each person.
We see these things so you can too.
We are Total Eye Care Center – and we'd love to see you.



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Call us for Glaucoma and Cataract examinations or visit www.totaleyecarecenter.com

Michael P. Pennachio, M.D. • Craig D. Fishman, M.D. • Jeffrey A. Sheridan, M.D. • Sonya M. Braudway, O.D.

Reflections Of The Past

It is difficult to determine the precise date of the first eye surgery in history, but cuneiform tablets from ancient Mesopotamia suggest that this and other medical procedures were being explored as early as 3000 B.C.!

In 1470, Leonardo da Vinci determined that the retina is an organ of sight.

In 1666, Isaac Newton advanced his vision color theory.

In 1710, Peirre Brissean and Antoine Maitre-Jan each determined that cataract is clouding and hardening of the eye's lens.

In 1775, Jacques Daviel provided the first modern description of extracting lenses affected by cataracts.

In 1830, William Mackenzie identified and classified glaucoma.

In 1851, Hermann Helmholtz invented the direct ophthalmoscope.

In 1862, Allvar Gullstrand designed the first slitlamp biomicroscope, an achievement which later earned him a Nobel Prize.

In 1931, Jules Gonin described the first principals of retinal detachment surgery.

On in to today, as advancements continue to be made and refined, Total Eye Care Center remains among the best in ophthalmology, yet with a debt of gratitude for those who pioneered the field over so many previous generations. ✂

Omega-3 Fatty Acids May Lower Cataract Risk...

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intake of omega-3 fatty acids have a fairly dramatic decrease in onset of the predicted disease.

Dietary sources of n-3 PUFA's include salmon, flaxseed, walnuts, soybeans, navy and kidney beans as well as tofu and winter squash to name a few. The American Heart Association has confirmed that omega-3 fatty acids benefit the heart of healthy people, and those at high risk of — or who have — cardiovascular disease.

Be sure to discuss your diet with your doctor to determine whether increased omega-3 fatty acid intake may be helpful in your efforts to remain healthier longer. Also, to schedule routine eye examinations and to benefit from early diagnosis of potential vision problems, call Total Eye Care Center today. ✂

Untangling The Web

The internet is certainly a vast source of information that can be easily referenced by individuals, but not all the information may be valuable or even accurate. A study published in a September, 2007 ophthalmology journal cautions that a Google search is no substitute for the professional diagnosis of an ophthalmologist.

As would be expected, among the useful online data are also opinions and the vested interests of parties who are either misinformed or burdened by financial interests involved in selling particular products and services. Finding objective reference material which can be of actual help to one's eye health is commonplace, yet so is finding strictly commercial sales pitches, especially among the higher results in search engine findings.

"There is nothing wrong with commerce", says Dr. Michael Pennachio of Total Eye Care Center upon reading the findings of a recent study on this subject. "It's just that people who are seeking alternative medical approaches to their vision problems need to be careful to consider the sources and to fully discuss more tested and traditional eye care procedures with their eye doctor before following online advice which may be good for someone's web sales but of no practical use to a patient in need of real medicine."

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It is, in fact, this area of "complementary and alternative medicine" (CAM) that has piqued the interest of researchers the most as it may have the potential to do as much harm as good among those who eschew the doctor's office for an internet transaction based on information presented by a party with a vested interest in a particular non-medical product or service.

Using eight popular search engines and likely keywords and phrases, researchers identified twenty-one websites which would likely be visited by people seeking CAM information. Specifics such as "glaucoma" were used in the search phrases to narrow some of the results to the field of ophthalmology. Sites were evaluated using a numbered grading system to qualify such metrics as ownership, authorship, sourcing, whether material was current, interactivity, navigability and balanced opinion.

Websites were also judged on the following questions:

- Does the site discourage the use of conventional medicine?
- Does the site discourage adherence to a clinician's advice?
- Does the site provide opinions and experiences rather than factual details?
- Does the site provide commercial details?

The higher the number scored for a given site the more risky it was deemed to be. While no site studied actually discouraged the use of conventional medicine, 2 sites scored a 3 out of 4 for potential risk factors, the majority scored in the medium range and only four sites achieved the highest possible score.

Specifically, certain studies shown and opinions given were factually flawed. In many cases, websites featuring CAM information described benefits of particular vitamin intake or use of compounds and supplements that have been clinically proven to have no measurable effect in actual medical applications.

While it is comforting that this limited study found no obviously dangerous advice being dispensed, it does serve to reinforce that all information gained through a layperson's search for medical and health advice be taken with a grain or two of salt and to consult your actual physician to be sure of the conventional approaches to any serious health concerns. ✂

Anytime Allergies

Florida is loved by many for the fun, the sun and the lack of the severe seasonal changes associated with more frigid climates. However, there may be a price to be paid for everything being green all year around. With plants and animals constantly active, along with the blooms and the beauty, there are increased allergic reactions for some who live here.

The orange blossoms of January, spring pollens, summer grasses, naturally occurring mold spores, vehicle emissions and constant exposure to air conditioning are but a few of the sources for watery, itchy eyes, intermittent blurring of vision and overactive sinus conditions.

For some, with diagnosed dry eye conditions, the combination of allergens with their tear dysfunction syndrome can be miserable. Individuals of a certain age range, or who are taking certain medications can be very susceptible. Also, eye strain from close-up work or time spent staring at a computer can combine with allergens to exacerbate a dry eye problem. Even the air vents in automobiles which provide comfort from the high temperatures of summer can be the reason for increased irritation and dry eye symptoms.

For those who suffer with allergies and whose vision is affected, there are some methods for mitigating the exposure and the adverse effects. Environmental modifications such as routinely changing disposable A/C filters in the home or having upgraded filtration systems cleaned can reduce dry eye irritation. Artificial tears and cold compresses can be a direct benefit to one who has dysfunction and discomfort of the eye due to allergens. Some over-the-counter and prescribed antihistamines can combat the negative effects of allergens providing relief. Even topical steroids have been administered and closely monitored by physicians for patients who meet the criteria for such aggressive medical treatment.

As residents of the Sunshine State we are able to enjoy some wonderful natural advantages, but we should be aware of any changes in eye comfort or vision that can result from aging or an increased vulnerability to environmental particulates. For more information, or to schedule an eye examination, call Total Eye Care Center at 352-728-1717. ✂



For more information on our practice, please visit www.totaleyecarecenter.com