

The Spectacle

Peabody Vision Associates 229 Andover St. (Rte 114) Peabody (978) 532-1022 Winter 2007

Optomap Exams – New Addition

By: Dr. Tiffany Chang

In the last newsletter, I wrote an article talking about the importance of dilation, a drop that opens your pupils so the doctor can peer inside your eyes. While the health and preventative benefits of a dilated exam are tremendous, the drops temporarily cause light sensitivity and blurry vision that can last up to 6 hours. Because of that, it is often (understandably) difficult for our patients to plan a dilation into their busy schedules.

The retina is the nerve tissue lining the back of your eyes. Most of it is hidden when we do not dilate your eyes. It is the important tissue that catches light and transforms it into vision. While nothing can ever replace a good dilated exam, I'm excited to tell you about a new camera that we've acquired at the office!

Both Dr. Hamel and I hope that by providing you with this new invaluable, quick, and side-effect-free service, we can specifically target patients who require dilation, catch extremely subtle and early changes in otherwise healthy eyes, and create a template of your retina to compare with as you age. This is a new service that benefits all our patients from age 6 months to beyond!

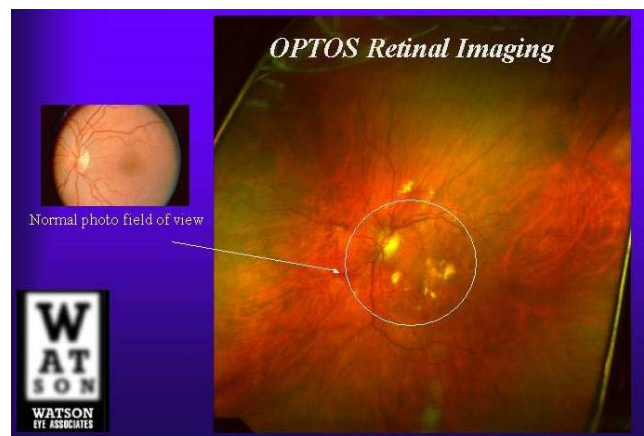


The **Optomap** is cutting edge technology that we are recommending and incorporating as a routine addition to *all eye exams*. The machine is a large camera that uses revolutionary laser scanning technology to photograph 200 degrees of your retina without a dilation.

200 degrees is simply astounding. In the exam room, without a dilation, we see about 10-15 degrees of your retina at a time. The Optomap can record 200 degrees in the span of a snapshot. It documents your eyes as they are today and allows us to compare for subtle changes in the years to come. In addition, the Optomap is able to separate the layers of tissue within your eye, information that is unavailable from dilation – and it does all this in a flash and without side effects that interrupt your work day.

For those of you with pre-existing conditions (such as high prescriptions, sun damage, diabetes, hypertension, myasthenia gravis, glaucoma suspect, macular degeneration, etc), it will document and catch subtle changes within your eyes. For everybody else (and especially our patients with active lifestyles who chronically decline dilation), the Optomap will pick up holes, tears, tumors, detachments, and subtle changes especially in the periphery of your eyes – without a dilation.

Dr. Hamel and I believe that the Optomap is important for everyone. We are one of the few offices in the area that have the Optomap. We are excited to introduce it to you (and show you the inside of your eyes) as we examine you this upcoming year.



The Good Sunglass

By Dr. Tiffany Chang

In the past 6 months, I have noticed a trend amongst my patients that I would like to discuss with everyone. More and more, I have been diagnosing pinguecula and pterygia, two benign but problematic eye degenerations that are related to environmental and UV exposure. As we head into the winter months that are abundant in harsh environmental conditions and bright reflections off the Massachusetts snow, all of us are at higher risk for developing or exacerbating both these eye conditions. Let me share with you how to protect your eyes.

Chronic exposure to UV-A and UV-B can lead to eye conditions such as pinguecula, pterygia, cataracts, and macular degeneration. Sudden extreme exposure to UV-A and UV-B can cause painful damage, redness, and radiation retinopathy.

While some of us may be at higher risk due to genetics (ex: fair skinned individuals), we can all reduce our risk for UV-related eye disease by consistent use of good sunglasses.

The US Environmental Protection Agency publishes a daily UV-Index Map that shows the daily UV danger level in each part of the USA. The site is listed below. It may be a good idea to stay indoors on high danger days:

- <http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html>

Ultimate eye protection is with sunglasses that block UV-A and UV-B. We want all our patients to have:

- Maximum side coverage (wrappy or thick temples)
- At least 99% UV protection -- if you are not sure that your sunglasses have this, bring them in and we'll check it out for you!

Your Doctors

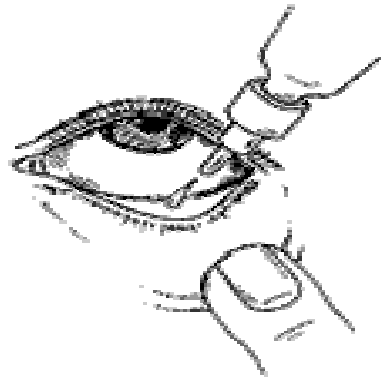


Dr. Paul Hamel, OD



Dr. Tiffany Chang, OD

Proper Drop Instillation



1. Wash your hands.
2. Gently pull the lower lid away from the eyeball so you form a pocket.
3. Squeeze ONE drop of the medicine into the pocket. Be careful with the pressure you apply. Some bottles dispense very easily.
4. Close your eyes and apply pressure to the inner corners of your closed eyes. This is to prevent the eye medicine from entering the tear drainage system and affecting the rest of your body. You can stick this step if you're using artificial tears.



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Exp: 3/30/2007

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