

Rx briefs

Relax

You're never too old or too young to learn and practice the art of yoga. The Oakwood Complementary & Alternative Medicine Center in Westland is offering an ongoing class called "Beginning Hatha Yoga." The next eight-week session will meet every Tuesday evening, 6:15 p.m. or 7:30-8:45 p.m., beginning May 29. You will learn yoga postures and breathing techniques to promote better flexibility, strength and relaxation. The total cost is \$68. The center also is offering a class called an "Introduction to Mindfulness, Meditation and Relaxation." It will be offered 6:30-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 7. Learn meditation techniques to help you relax and to improve your overall health. The cost is \$25. Please call 800-543-WELL to reserve your spot for both classes.

Breast cancer

The Breast Cancer site is having trouble getting enough people to click on it daily to meet its quota of donating at least one free mammogram a day to an underprivileged woman. It takes less than a minute to go to their site and click on "donating a mammogram" for free (pink window in the middle). This doesn't cost you a thing. Their corporate sponsors/advertisers use the number of daily visits to donate mammograms in exchange for advertising. Please tell 10 friends to tell 10 today! Here's the web site: <http://www.thebreastcancer-site.com>. Pass it along to people you know.

Livonia rec center

St. Mary Mercy Hospital will partner with the new Livonia Community Recreation Center by offering on-site health screenings, such as CPR classes, physical therapy services, massage therapy and more. The center, located on Five Mile and Hubbard roads, offers exercise and fitness equipment, multiple gymsnasiums, pools, and adult and kids fitness programs. It opens to the public 5:30 a.m. Monday, April 14. For more information about the services St. Mary Mercy will offer at the center, call the hospital's Community Outreach Department at (734) 655-8940.

Better bones

A Creighton University researcher evaluated data from previously published studies on women and bone health to determine if calcium intake plays a role in the risk of being overweight during mid-life. The analysis found that women who consumed lower amounts of calcium gained an average of nearly a pound a year by mid-life. Conversely, women who consumed higher amounts of calcium - the amount of calcium found in about three servings of milk, cheese or yogurt - averaged a slight weight loss. He estimates the incidence of overweight and obesity may be reduced by as much as 60 to 80 percent if dietary calcium intakes were shifted upward to the current recommendation of 1000 mg a day for women ages 19-50. Sources: Heaney, R.P. Normalizing Calcium Intake: Projected Population Effects for Body Weight. *Journal of Nutrition*, 2002; 132:2685-2705.



Technician Melissa Moers does an eye scan of a patient using Optomap technology.

Optomap

New eye care technology makes it easier to detect and prevent eye disease

BY KIMBERLY MORTSON
STAFF WRITER

A revolutionary development in the field of eye care technology is improving ophthalmologists' and optometrists' ability to detect and prevent eye disease. The noninvasive procedure is now being offered at Suburban Eye Care in Livonia - only the second practice in the state of Michigan to offer the modality.

Optomap, a retinal eye exam, takes a full color digital image of the retina in less than one second. The image improves a doctor's ability to see virtually the entire retina. Conventional tests only expose a small area of the retina at a time (approximately 30 percent). The Optomap technology reveals 200 percent of the back of your eye to help doctors check retina health and determine if it is showing signs of damage or disease.

The technology is so precise it's helping doctors detect eye disease at its earliest stages in hopes of treating the issue successfully and avoiding vision loss.

"The Optomap increases the quality of the retinal exam by allowing us to view almost the entire retina at the start of the exam, which can have important implications, not only for detecting eye disease, but also in detecting and managing other medical

conditions such as diabetes," said Dr. John P. Jacobi. "We recommend all of our patients have this exam, which has already detected issues in some of our patients that could have otherwise gone undetected."

COMFORTABLE AND QUICK

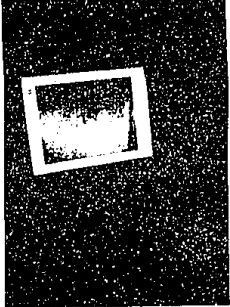
The Optomap retinal exam takes a computer-generated high resolution image of the retina, which can be instantaneously evaluated by doctors.

Aside from the technological advancement the system possesses, it provides a comfortable and quick way for patients to be tested without the need for pupil dilation, eye drops, blurred vision or sensitivity to light.

Larry Marliugh, a Livonia resident, suffers from retinitis pigmentosa (RP) - the name given to a group of disorders of the retina, all of which result in a progressive reduction in vision. The retina is the light-sensitive tissue inside the eye in which the first stages of seeing take place. In RP disorders, various parts of the retina cease to function.

Marliugh's 78-year-old father and aunt both have the condition but at the present time neither of his sons have been diagnosed.

"This machine took a picture of my eye, and Dr. Jacobi showed me how the



John Jacobi reviews an inner eye scan.

walls of the blood vessels around my retina are starting to thin. That's because of the RP.

"There's nothing they can do right now except monitor it," added Marliugh.

The 53-year-old Livonia man says he was diagnosed at 45 and is appreciative of the technology that will eliminate his need to have his eyes dilated all the time in order for the doctor to

check the progress of RP. "I think it's great."

DRIVEN

The Optos modality was developed by Douglas Anderson, a 50-year-old industrial designer whose 5-year-old son, Leif, suffered spontaneous retinal detachment in 1990. The condition was detected too late and the child subsequently lost the sight in one eye.

Concerned by the limited capabilities of the tools that practitioners had available to them to view the retina effectively and to help prevent what had happened to Leif happening to others, Douglas then put his company, Crombie Anderson Design Consultants, to work to find a way to examine the retina in a more doctor- and patient-friendly way.

Anderson and his team of engineers spent three years researching possible solutions to the problem, and the next three years were dedicated to developing a useful product. This work led to the development of the Panoramic200, the world's first ophthalmic device capable of producing a single, high-resolution ultra wide-field image of the retina (known as the Optomap Retinal Image) without the need for dilation of the pupil.

PLEASE SEE OPTOMAP, C8

Dry eye syndrome could lead to loss of vision

More than 10 million Americans are affected by dry eye syndrome. Of those, several million don't even realize it. Many people experience periodic or constant irritation, stinging or burning and think it's normal. They may attribute it to getting older or their dry workplace. While those things can certainly contribute to dry eye, they're not good enough reasons to tolerate the symptoms. Dry eye syndrome is a preventable condition that can lead to severe eye damage and loss of vision if left untreated.

Dr. Michael Peterson

What is dry eye syndrome? Dry eye syndrome is the decline of the quality or quantity of tears bathing the eye. It may be due to the eyes not producing enough tears, not being able to maintain the proper amount of tears or producing tears with the wrong chemical makeup.

How are tears produced? The body makes two types of tears. Lubricating tears are made while awake. They keep your eyes moist and clean and help fight infection. The tear film contains layers of water, mucus and oil. Dry eye occurs when any of these layers is disrupted. Reflex tears are made in response to injury, irritation (such as smoke or dust) or emotion.

What are the symptoms of dry eye syndrome?

Dry eye symptoms can vary greatly, but most commonly include: irritated, scratchy red eyes; itching; a stinging or burning sensation; a sandy gritty feeling and/or a foreign body sensation. Some of the early warning signs are an occasional burning sensation in the eyes when in areas of low humidity or high pollution, the inability to cry under emotional stress, decreased tolerance of contact lenses, watering eyes or blurred vision. Because prolonged dry eye may result in permanent damage, it is imperative that these early warning signs are not ignored. Dry eyes are watering all the time. How can

What causes dry eye syndrome?

The most common culprit is aging, which results in decreased tears, but many other things may be to blame. General health problems, like arthritis, Sjogren's Syndrome, lupus, leukemia or thyroid disorders, can lead to dry eye. Incomplete or decreased blinking from a mechanical or anatomical problem or because of prolonged near work can be the problem. People taking certain medications, such as antibiotics, and contraceptives, hormone replacement therapy, antihistamines and diuretics, may suffer also. Many individuals are affected by infection or inflammation of the tear-producing glands. This condition is known as

blepharitis, or meibomianitis, and may need to be treated with antibiotics.

Who is affected?

Many of the 10 million people suffer from age-related dry eye; in fact, it is estimated that 75 percent of people 65 and older will experience dry eye symptoms. It occurs in both men and women, but is most common in women who are pregnant or post-menopausal. People suffering from allergies and those wearing contact lenses have a greater risk of developing dry eye.

How is dry eye syndrome treated?

Unfortunately, dry eye cannot be cured, but treatments do exist that may virtually eliminate the symptoms. Therapy can be very simple, but there are instances when more complex treatment is necessary. Some available treatments include:

Artificial tears and lubricating ointments provide temporary relief and can

PLEASE SEE SYNDROME, C8