

Vision –Saving Discoveries Discussed at 14th Annual Symposia

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) can be a devastating disease to those affected by it. If certain cases are not treated early enough, AMD can destroy a person's central vision and, in turn, their ability to perform everyday tasks such as easily reading the newspaper, driving a car, or recognizing the faces of their loved ones. But, hope is on the horizon both here in Southwest Florida and in Boston. New vision-saving discoveries are being made every day in the effort of finding a cure for AMD.

Those discoveries will be the focus of Retina Consultants of Southwest Florida's 14th Annual Eye and Vision Research Symposia in January. This free event highlights the latest news on vision-saving research being done here in Southwest Florida and in Boston at The Schepens Eye Research Institute (SERI), an affiliate of Harvard Medical School.

"Retina Consultants is proud to announce that Dr. Kameran Lashkari, one of SERI's top research scientists, will join us this year," said Dr. Glenn L. Wing of Retina Consultants of Southwest Florida. "Dr. Lashkari will present his very latest research on his theory regarding the connection between systemic inflammation and the development of AMD."

Dr. Lashkari will discuss his findings into chemical substances produced by the body when inflammation is present and how it may be associated with the development and progression of AMD. This theory, he believes, could be traced by using the patient's blood. If this is true, Dr. Lashkari says a simple blood test might make it possible to identify AMD by using biomarkers in the patient's DNA before the onset of any symptoms of the disease are present.

Dr. Lashkari also works closely with one of his SERI colleagues, Dr. Michael Young, who was the guest speaker last year at Retina Consultant's symposia. Dr. Lashkari will discuss the new information that he and Dr. Young have uncovered regarding stem cell research and the efforts to regenerate retinal cells to replace cells that are either damaged or dead.

"These two scientists are approaching AMD at two very different angles," says Dr. Wing. "Dr. Lashkari is trying to stop the disease before it has a chance to cause damage. Dr. Young is working to repair damage that has or may be done in the future. Both aspects have the ability to transform countless patients' lives in the future."

In the meantime, groundbreaking new research is also taking place at Retina Consultants' office in Fort Myers.

"At our research facility, the National



Dr. Glenn L. Wing



Dr. Kameran Lashkari

Ophthalmic Research Institute (NORI), we are taking part in 22 studies covering diseases such as macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and retinal vein occlusion," said Dr. Wing. "We have some exciting news regarding some of the major ongoing studies and how they could affect our patients."

In addition to the discussion of the pioneering efforts of our research partners, Retina Consultants is proud to share the stage with the director of our Low Vision Rehabilitation Center, Dr. Donald C. Fletcher. As he has for the past 13 years, Dr. Fletcher will share inspirational stories of his patients' struggles and successes dealing with low vision.

Rounding out the symposia agenda is Rich Godfrey, SERI's patient liaison. He will discuss how his loss of vision, due to AMD, has given him the ability to empathize with patients while sharing the exciting news about the on-goings at SERI.

As in years past, Retina Consultants will provide time for attendees to visit with low vision device vendors and public service organizations before and after the program.

This is the seminar you've waited for all year!

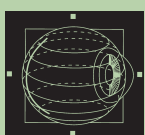
This symposia series is free and open to the public. Registration is required. Seats are limited and available on a first come, first serve basis.

14th Annual EYE & VISION RESEARCH SYMPOSIA

Sponsored by:



Retina Consultants
of Southwest Florida®



THE SCHEPENS
EYE RESEARCH
INSTITUTE



NORI
National Ophthalmic Research Institute®
ENVISION THE FUTURE®

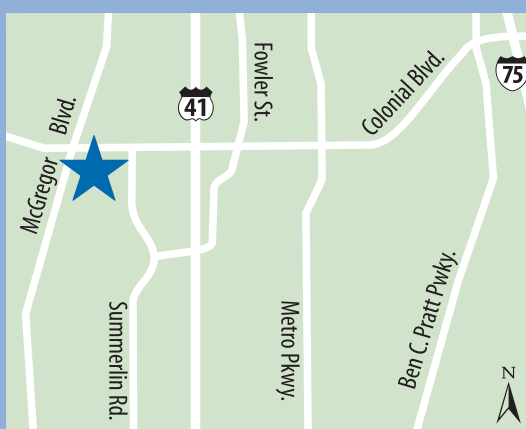
Register Toll Free:
1.866.258.8505

Friday January 15, 2010

Registration: 9 am
Program: 10 – 11:30am

Broadway Palm Dinner Theater
1380 Colonial Blvd.
Fort Myers

(In the Royal Palm Plaza near
the intersection of Colonial Blvd.
and Summerlin Rd.)

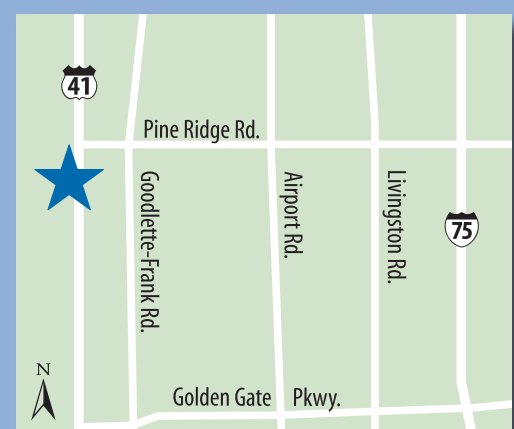


Saturday January 16, 2010

Registration: 9 am
Program: 10 – 11:30am

Hilton Naples
5111 Tamiami Trail North
Naples

Located on Tamiami Trail/US 41
just south of the
Pine Ridge Road intersection



Complimentary valet parking available