

EYE NEWS

FALL 2017



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A Note from Dr. Winthrop

2017 has been noteworthy in that I feel energized by my practice and I enjoy medicine and ophthalmology more than ever. It is hard for me to believe not only how much better the improvements in delivering care have become, but how far and fast they have occurred. The combination of advanced technology and my experience and medical judgment have catapulted my results to a higher level. I am excited to come to work in the morning and am moved by the deep appreciation for the improvement in lifestyles I am able to achieve. Since I am at the top of my game, so to speak, my plan is to keep practicing for the foreseeable future. I have been blessed with a profession that is tremendously rewarding.

Since we are all living longer and working longer, the goal of maintaining good health is a high priority for me, and something I stress in conversation with my patients. My current exercise regimen is to work out on an elliptical machine that I keep at home. Every morning at 5 am, I climb on up and get at it. I must say that I have never been a “gym” person and generally prefer being outside, but I’m impressed that I can get a good workout without putting too much stress on my joints, which is a real plus. Additionally, I try hard to maintain a healthy diet, which means eating two balanced meals per day, breakfast and lunch, and limiting evening intake to a light snack at dinnertime. We try to keep nothing “white” in the house, such as bread, pasta or processed food, and we watch the carbohydrates. Not so hard now that the kids have flown the nest. I’m planning on a busy active lifestyle for many years to come, and diet and exercise are the key!

In June, Betsy and I took our first river cruise on the Danube (it is not “blue”!) We traveled with two other couples, friends from my high school days. We started in Prague and ended in Budapest and then had a few days in London on the way home. It was very enjoyable (although our luggage arrived in Prague four days after we did...) I would definitely do it again. The highlight was the fun of being with my high school friends.

I continue to spend the majority of my free time gardening. This year I planted a cactus and succulent garden that I am very proud of. With the rain that Santa Barbara received this year, my fruit trees were very productive and kept me happily supplied with fresh peaches, nectarines, plums and apricots.

My children are busy going about their adult lives. Sam is still happily single in LA, working in the finance sector. Mia is in her final year of medical school and has decided to specialize in pediatric psychiatry. Rachel is finishing up her college studies at the University of San Diego. They still love Santa Barbara and try to come home as often as they can, which I consider a great gift.

Professionally, this has been another fun and rewarding year in medicine. My office environment is a pleasure to work in due to my awesome staff. Check out the staff notes for more about them. The time I spend at the Santa Barbara Surgery Center is also very gratifying, due to the highly professional staff that supports me there. The continued advancements in cataract surgery are hugely satisfying, and it remains the most successful major operation performed in the U.S. The level of care that I can provide now was

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Thank You For Your Referrals

Each year we definitely want to recognize and thank you for your referrals. Dr. Winthrop continues to see new patients in his practice of comprehensive Ophthalmology. It is our pledge to give your family and friends the same care you enjoy, whether they are seeking a routine eye exam, surgical treatment, or a second opinion.

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unimaginable when I started in Ophthalmology.

Not surprisingly, LASIK also continues to be a highlight of my practice. With the ease and convenience of my in-office LASIK suite, and with further refinements in the technology, LASIK continues to deliver truly amazing outcomes. It is hard to believe I have now been performing this procedure for 21 years. It is a tried and true technology.

Finally, I wish all of my patients a joyous and healthy holiday season. It is a privilege to provide your eye care and I am honored by the trust you place in me. I remain deeply committed to maintaining the highest level of service possible for you. I sincerely appreciate your continuing confidence in me. 🌟

Highlights

Professionally, the highlight of my year has been the continued integration of the Femtosecond laser into my cataract practice. When LASIK was first introduced in the United States (I started performing LASIK in 1996), it became the gold standard for accuracy and precision in refractive surgery. There really was not any other procedure that was close. But now with the use of the Femtosecond laser (LenSx), premium intra-ocular lenses (IOL's), Lenstar, ORA, and Verion, cataract surgery also provides outstanding outcomes.

Lenstar is the machine I use prior to surgery to determine the appropriate power for each patient's new replacement lens (IOL). Previous machines used ultrasound to perform this task, but the Lenstar uses an optical laser light. This is more precise. The Lenstar also measures the corneal curvature, anterior chamber depth (ACD), and white-to-white (WTW) more accurately. With this improved data, the computer formulae can better predict the correct power of your IOL.

The LenSx laser creates surgical incisions and eliminates the use of scalpel blades and diamond surgical knives. The laser creates the same 2.4 mm incision in a 3-plane incision with a 1500 micron cord length, every time. It also creates a centered, perfectly round 5 mm capsulorrhexis, every time. No human can replicate this accuracy. By eliminating the potential variables in these 2 steps of your cataract surgery, LenSx greatly assists in the appropriate positioning of the IOL and thus the refractive outcome.

Additionally, if you have astigmatism (meaning your cornea is out of round and shaped more like an egg than spherical like a baseball), the TORIC premium IOL can internally correct this irregularity. Astigmatism has an axis or angle and the TORIC IOL must be placed on the "steep" axis of your astigmatism. Before surgery, I measure your astigmatism with the Lenstar in the upright, sitting position, but I perform cataract surgery in the supine, lying position. When you go from upright to lying flat, your eyes "cyclotort" (or rotate), and each patient is a little bit different. Enter Verion. Verion corrects for cyclotorsion by taking a picture of your eye when you are sitting during your pre-operative exam, and then also takes a picture when you are lying flat for your procedure, and then it auto corrects for any cyclotorsion. I bring a memory stick from my office to surgery that carries this information, and I plug it into both the LenSx laser and the operating room microscope. Once engaged, Verion presents an image in the eyepiece of the microscope that corresponds to the steep axis of your cornea, corrects for your cyclotorsion, and shows where the TORIC IOL should be implanted.

Another part of this equation is ORA. This high tech equipment is also attached to the operating room microscope. Once your cataract is removed, ORA will reconfirm and double check the correct IOL power to be used, and can be more accurate than pre-operative measurements because it takes the measurement in the aphakic state (i.e. after your original lens is removed.) Taken together, all of this new technology creates a powerful surgical tool. It has made my cataract patients and me very happy. 🌟

Guiding You Through the Process of Cataract Removal

It is frequently the case that my patients know they have cataracts for quite awhile before I actually schedule their surgery. I monitor the progression of the condition and wait until the effect on the patient's vision is significant enough to impair his or her lifestyle. Once that point is reached, there are a number of decisions that must be made concerning the procedure. If you have cataracts and are anticipating surgery, I want to assure you that I will help you through this process and recommend the choices that are best suited to both your unique physical characteristics and your financial requirements.



Toward this end, I now have an interactive video program loaded on an office iPad for my cataract patients. It is roughly 10 minutes long and is divided into 3 sections. After you have viewed the video, I will personally discuss and answer your questions. I understand each of my patients' individual needs and I will recommend the choices that will ensure not only the best possible outcome, but that you will be happy with your surgery. 🎧

Premium IOL's

I always like to give an update on Premium Intra-ocular lenses (IOL's) in the newsletter. The Holy Grail for a replacement lens would be an IOL that provides good distance vision as well as good reading vision without any annoying side effects. We are not there yet - but there is a new product that is getting us closer to our goal. The Symphony Multifocal is a new design that improves upon its predecessor. It reduces the presence of glare and halos at night, and the center optic is biased for increased clarity and quality of distance vision. The Symphony also improves the quality of intermediate or mid-range vision, which is used for computer viewing, cooking, eating, and seeing the dashboard of your car when driving.

Another premium lens that I like very much is the TORIC IOL, which is used for correcting astigmatism. Patient satisfaction is very high with the Toric IOL, especially in combination with Verion. As discussed elsewhere in this newsletter, it is my feeling that the TORIC lens is more a quality of life issue as opposed to a convenience issue. By eliminating astigmatism, your vision is qualitatively made better with a freedom from glasses otherwise not attainable. 🎧

LASIK v. Refractive Lensectomy

With the advances in modern day cataract surgery that I have detailed over the past several years, we have seen an overlap between the visual outcomes possible with LASIK and cataract surgery. Increasingly patients ask, "Which procedure should I have?" Certainly, that is a question that can only be answered on a case-by-case basis, but I can provide some broad guidelines.

For the most part, the question arises for patients over the age of 60 who come to me inquiring about LASIK. Before the age of 60, LASIK remains the absolute gold standard for refractive outcomes and is still your best option. However after 60 years of

age, there are pros and cons to consider for either procedure.

As a quick reminder, refractive lensectomy and cataract surgery are interchangeable terms for the same procedure. A distinction is made by the insurance industry for billing purposes since cataract surgery is covered by insurance while refractive lensectomy is not. The distinction lies in the presence or absence of a cataract of the crystalline lens. After 60 years of age, just about everyone has some degree of "clouding" of his or her lens. However, surgery is not indicated (or covered by insurance) until the clouding impairs one's vision.

When utilizing all the advancements in refractive lensectomy/ataract surgery (the Femtosecond laser, ORA, VERION and premium IOLs) the refractive outcomes are almost equivalent to LASIK. But if you already have some clouding on your own lens, refractive lensectomy may be a better option for you since it is a once-in-a-lifetime surgery. Once your cloudy lens is removed and replaced with an IOL, your refractive goal to see without glasses has been met with a single surgery that will never need to be repeated. It is not like a hip replacement that may need to be repeated in 10 years. Everyone will develop cataracts over their lifetime, without exception. So for older patients there are decisions and choices that can best be determined based on your refractive needs and individual anatomy. All of this can be discussed thoroughly during a consultation. 🎧

Electronic Health Records

In the last decade the federal government mandated that all medical practitioners who are enrolled in Medicare must transition to electronic health records. The ostensible reason for this edict was to promote better-informed physicians and improve patient care by standardizing data intake and making all pertinent medical history available throughout a patient's life, whether the patient moves or changes doctors. About 5 years ago I purchased an electronic health records system for my practice, only to abandon it after 2 or 3 months. It was awful. It redirected almost all of my attention away from my patients to a computer monitor with endless drop-down screens and mouse clicks.

After this five-year hiatus, it was my hope that the systems available would be much improved. The



company I have been using for practice management and billing was the logical choice to use for EHR. However, I wanted to see the system “live” before committing to it. So I drove down to an ophthalmology practice in Orange County and spent a day observing the system in action. I must say that my jaw dropped and my back muscles tightened up over the course of the visit. The system was slow, tedious and again took the physician away from the normal patient interaction that I so enjoy. Needless to say, I was very disappointed.

I wish I could explain why this is the case. While I have my doubts about the true motivation for this government mandate, it has not accomplished its stated purpose. When I receive records compiled by a government sanctioned EHR program, I have to wade through pages of meaningless data while trying to extract positive findings relevant to the patient's condition. The transition to the uniformity of EHR has made medical records “plain vanilla”; it has created bland mediocrity and taken the heart out of doctor/patient relationships. The rigid format of the system inhibits and discourages the use of my own experience and judgment as it pertains to each unique human being before me. EHR is focused on data input and meeting identical criteria for each patient encounter, whether or not the data requested or criteria enumerated by the system is relevant to that particular patient. It is making good physicians worse while failing to make poor physicians better.

So at this point in time my decision is to stay with my tried and true charting system. Each year I will pay a penalty to the government for this choice, but I will not be turning my back to you and spending my time facing a computer monitor. I find it so ironic that in my practice I own and use so much technologically advanced equipment, yet still put pen to paper when it comes to maintaining patient histories. Oh well! 🐾

Social Media

I have increasingly found that many new patients find their way to me via the Internet. We have always encouraged our LASIK patients to post about their experience on Facebook, but with the rapidly changing ways in which we all make use of the Internet, new methods of finding professional referrals are replacing the old tried and true avenues of asking for advice from relatives and friends. So we now urge all of our patients

who use social media to post comments about their eye care online, whether they have come to see me for LASIK, cataracts, a unique problem or even well patient care. Of course we should all evaluate online reviews critically, but Facebook and YELP are frequently the first source for referrals, whether one is looking for a restaurant, a general contractor, or a doctor! Thank you for taking the time to post. I sincerely appreciate your trust in me whether you recommend me to a family member or friend, or post a review online. 🐾

Latisse

Latisse is an FDA approved product used for cosmetic purposes that I sell in my office. Latisse encourages growth in the upper lid eyelashes, making them longer, darker and denser. It is applied once daily and although the instructions tell you to apply Latisse at bedtime, I recommend applying Latisse in the morning. My reservation about using Latisse at bedtime is that it can migrate onto the surrounding skin when you lie down, which may cause redness. My wife Betsy uses a fine eyeliner brush to apply the liquid, lets it dry and then applies her eye make-up. Whatever is left over in her brush she usually dabs on her eyebrows. It takes about 3-5 weeks of daily application for your eyelashes to show the benefits of Latisse. I now carry the larger 5cc bottle. 🐾

Service Animals Only

As many of you know, I am a real animal lover, and I especially adore my two year old puppies Buster and Pixie. So I regret that I must ask you to please leave your pet at home during your visit to my office. This is for the health and safety of your fellow patients, some of whom are highly allergic or fearful of dogs. Additionally, our equipment is finely calibrated and sensitive to environmental particulate matter such as animal hair. This “No Pets” policy applies to emotional support animals, comfort animals and therapy animals.

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Santa Barbara's “Best” Eye Doctor

I am honored that for the ninth year in a row I was voted Best LASIK Surgeon by the Santa Barbara News-Press. Thank you for your continuing support. I will always endeavor to do my best for each and every one of you. 🐾



I Welcome New Patients

Because I advertise my LASIK practice but not my medical practice (routine eye care, glaucoma, cataract and transplant surgery), patients sometimes think that my practice is only open to surgical patients. This is not true. I welcome all new patients and value your kind referrals for their comprehensive ophthalmology needs. I do not limit my practice only to LASIK or surgical ophthalmology. I love my LASIK practice because patients are so pleased with their outcome, but the heart and soul of my practice will always be taking care of patients with medical problems of the eye, and routine “well-patient” care to prevent those problems in the first place. 🐾

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Our office complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) allowing access for all individuals to public places. Therefore, I do allow working service dogs to accompany our patients. Service animals are individually trained to perform work or tasks for people with disabilities and are required to be leashed or harnessed. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA. I ask that you please leave your pets at home. Thank you for your cooperation and consideration of all our patients. 🐾

Staff Notes

This year I would like to highlight a few members of my staff. Claudia has been with me for over 25 years and has worked in ophthalmology for over 35 years. She is my surgery coordinator and is responsible for telephone counseling, seminars, and scheduling LASIK and cataract surgery. She works hard so that you will have a smooth surgical experience and have all your questions answered, eye drops ordered and appointments scheduled. Claudia has had LASIK and raves about the procedure.

Linda has worked for me for 15 years, and has over 20 years of ophthalmology experience. She started as a medical assistant, then became a Certified Ophthalmic Assistant (COA), and now manages the front desk. During LASIK procedures, she is my surgical assistant and is the microkeratome operator. She has had PRK herself and helps Claudia in PRK/LASIK counseling and scheduling.

Crystal has been my medical assistant for 4 years and is currently working on her COA. She also assists with the front desk and is our “hand holder” for LASIK. She performs retinal and optic nerve scans, stereo disc photos and fundus photography. She is in charge of all contact lens orders and is a certified Latisse liaison. In her spare time she is a licensed cosmetologist and does hair care for family and friends.

I am very proud of my staff for their breadth of experience and expertise. Every staff member is cross-trained and can cheerfully shift job descriptions in a blink. But even more importantly, I’m most proud that they are kind, considerate, and sensitive individuals who provide a better experience for you, the patient. 🐾



We Invite you to Visit Our Website

I encourage you to take a look at my website: www.seewinthrop.com. The website is constantly updated with new information and last year it was also reformatted so the content seamlessly adjusts to your device, whether you are using a smartphone, tablet, laptop or desktop computer.

On the website you will find answers to many of your questions about general eye anatomy, diseases of the eye, or a surgical procedure you may be contemplating. There are video clips and this year’s newsletter as well. You can also check out my academic and training history, download registration forms, get directions, or determine our office hours.

Whether you are a new or existing patient, visiting the website before an appointment will shorten your check-in time upon arrival. Since registration forms and insurance information need to be updated on a regular basis, I highly recommend that you download these forms from the website and fill them out prior to your visit. We now have Medicare forms online as well. If you come to your appointment armed



with these completed forms, together with a list of all medications you are currently taking, you can make a big contribution toward minimizing “wait” time. Thank you. 🌱



Stuart R. Winthrop, M.D.
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

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Free Screening for LASIK

Are you still not sure if you are ready for LASIK? In our experience family members wait to see who will "go first". Call us to schedule a complimentary screening at 730-9111 for you or your loved one. 🌱

CATARACT SEMINARS


We are hosting two cataract seminars this Fall. They will be held at our office at 515 E. Micheltorena Street. This will be a good time to gather more information about premium lens implants. If you elect to use a “premium” lens at the time of your cataract surgery, you can correct astigmatism and/or near, far and intermediate vision at the same time your cataract is removed. In most cases, your dependence on eyeglasses is significantly reduced. Come and listen while I explain how quick and easy cataract surgery can be. Light refreshments will be served. We hope you will join us! There is limited seating, so please R.S.V.P. @ 730-9111.

DATES & TIMES:

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 5:00 PM

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 5:00 PM

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SEE THE FUTURE CLEARLY

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