

HEALTH

COMMENTARY | *Aye eye Doc*

Lasers help bring cataract surgery in focus

By Dr. Rajesh Khanna
Special to the Acorn

There are a number of advantages to using the laser in cataract surgery. Mainly, the surgeon can plan the exact size of the eye capsule opening that is needed for the replacement lens. With lasers, the doctor can also determine the exact pattern in which the old lens will be broken up.

Tests prior to the procedure include obtaining a colored image of the surface of the eye and measuring the length of the eye.

A detailed clinical slit exam is required to assess the thickness, color and hardness of the problem lens. Any weakness in the support of the lens or abnormalities on the lens capsule must be spotted.

This information leads to a plan of action which is entered into the laser software. Modifications can be programmed and, in difficult cases, a second opinion can be obtained.

Laser cataract surgery is safe as it does not stress the lens capsule or its support. The same holds true in traumatic cataract cases where trauma weakens the support.

Use of the laser is beneficial in making openings in eyes with thick capsules such as those of children.

In people with white or red

cataracts, the capsule needs to be stained manually to be visualized, and still it may be difficult to get a good view of the area. The laser overcomes this challenge as it employs imaging in real time and vertical cutting to avoid any traction on the zonular support system.

The opening in the capsule can

Splitting of the lens by laser is done without any stress on the capsular bag or the zonular support system. Energy from the laser is delivered from the bottom towards the top, which allows gas generated by conversion of the lens material into plasma to escape, as well as allow the subsequent beam to work without interference from gas bubbles.

Sound energy, a commonly used procedure, can cause inflammation and affect the functioning of the cornea.

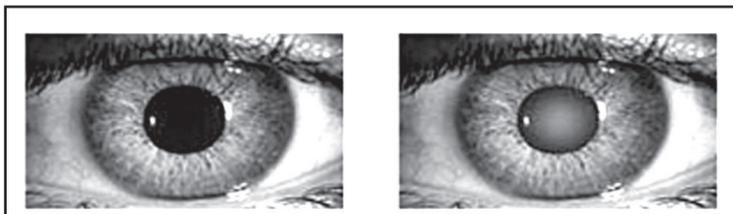
In dense cataracts, the bottom

is difficult to perceive so the capsule can be accidentally ruptured. Real-time display with the ability to be precise and avoid the bottom of the bag becomes an advantage when using the laser for cataract procedures.

Breaking apart a hard, afflicted lens can be time consuming with traditional sound wave technology. Lasers decrease the time and energy required to accomplish the same task.

Further progress in laser technology is coming. One day maybe even robots will be able to do safe and effective cataract surgeries. For now, we must still rely upon the skilled hands of human surgeons.

For more information about laser cataract surgery, visit www.piineye.com or contact the Khanna Institute at (805) 230-2126.



THE EYES HAVE IT—At left is a normal eye in contrast to an eye with a cataract. The picture shows how a cataract obscures the pupil and disrupts vision.

be controlled by the laser down to a tenth of a millimeter. The laser consistently generates an opening of the desired diameter and a shape that is difficult to reproduce manually. An experienced laser surgeon will make a fully accurate opening. Sometimes the shape may be eccentric or oval.

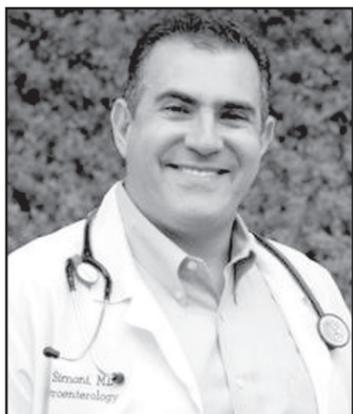
A more circular, central and precise opening is best when implanting an artificial lens. When using the Restor and Tecnis brands, the openings are usually a tad smaller than for Crystalens.

Laser surgery for cataracts is equally helpful in wound management. A precise opening will allow entry and exit of instruments and insertion of the implant without undue stress on the wound. This prevents wound leakage at the end of the procedure and therefore faster healing.

Physician to speak on colon cancer at mall

Screenings have reduced death rate

To celebrate Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, members of the community are invited to a free seminar to learn more about how to prevent colon cancer from 9 to 10 a.m. Thurs., March 28



Gibert Simoni, M.D.

at The Oaks mall near Macy's Home and Men's Store on the lower level, Thousand Oaks.

Guests should enter the mall at the east side of Nordstrom's Department Store.

Gilbert Simoni, MD, gastroenterologist on staff at Los Robles Hospital and Medical

Center, is the speaker.

Reservations are not necessary. Morning refreshments will be served.

According to the American Cancer Society, colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of death in both men and women combined in the U.S. The disease is expected to cause about 50,830 deaths during 2013.

With more people having screenings performed, such as colonoscopies, the death rate from colorectal cancer has been dropping for the past 20 years.

Regular screening or testing is one of the most effective means for preventing colorectal cancer.

This seminar is part of Health Chat, a free community health education outreach program, sponsored every third and fourth Thursday morning of the month by Los Robles Hospital.

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Celebration of Life honorees announced

The Cancer Support Community Valley/Ventura/Santa Barbara will recognize its Celebration of Life award honorees at a May 3 "Evening of Hope" gala in Westlake Village.

One of the biggest fundraisers of the year for the organization, the event will also feature entertainment, dinner and a silent and live auction.

The award honorees will be recognized for making an impact on the well-being of local cancer patients and their families through their work with the organization.

Marty Nason will receive a special Lifetime Achievement recognition. Nason co-founded the local Cancer Support Community with Beth Kin. For more than two decades she has overseen the cancer support programs at the organization. She has also helped cancer patients, survivors and family members as a support group facilitator.

Celebration of Excellence honoree Paul Miller provides expertise and leadership as

a member of the organization's Professional Advisory Board. He is board certified by the American College of Radiology and has been an assistant clinical professor in the UCLA School of Medicine Department of Radiation Oncology since 1990.

Celebration of Hope honoree Dale Richter is a CSCVVS participant and volunteer. As a member of the organization's Speaker's Bureau, he shares his story of esophageal cancer survivorship with many community groups. He also volunteers his time to provide orientation to newly diagnosed patients and their family members.

Celebration of Life honoree Renee Ripps has been a dedicated volunteer at the organization since 2005. She began by answering phones at the front desk and now helps in many areas, including coordinating volunteers for program and social events.

To purchase tickets, visit www.cancersupportvvsb.org or call Madeline Sattler at (805) 379-4777.

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