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Subject: Reminder to have annual eye exams...

Posted by [SickOptometrist](#) on Wed, 13 Apr 2005 02:02:46 GMT

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SuperFlyingEngiSickO, I have a question about eyeball medicine...

I heard from my dad that occasionally glaucoma patients will have their opaque corneas replaced with synthetic materials, at which point they can see, to an extent, into the ultraviolet spectrum. [Thus being able to do things like see the ultraviolet rings on flowers and such] I was just wondering if you had anything to share, or could shed some more light on this. I find the eye an incredibly interesting apparatus.

SuperFly' - In a situation where a patient has an opacified cornea secondary to severe glaucoma, there is very little chance that there is any residual optic nerve function left at that point (imagine the power supply cord on your CP being almost completely damaged). Therefore, any light/image that may be afforded to the back of the eye by a corneal prosthesis is going to provide rudimentary vision at best (limited shape recognition) because the signals simply are not being directed to the visual area of the brain.

Also, we have not seen repeatable success with 'synthetic' corneal grafts. Almost all corneal replacements are via donors & most are fairly successful in restoring vision to those who have intact & healthy internal ocular structure. Again, however, in a patient with glaucoma severe enough to cause corneal opacification, there would be very little visual benefit expected. Most likely, your father is referring to the benefits of modern day cataract surgery. We all develop cataract formation as a consequence of normal aging & damaging UV light exposure over our lifetime. Essentially the intra-ocular lens (lens inside the eye) "tans" over time eventually filtering out good light & limiting visual acuity or sharpness. For most, this starts to become problematic in the the late 60s. Cataracts tend to filter out the blue spectrum of light & this is such a slow, insidious process that patients don't realize they can't see blue light...You ever heard the expression "blue heads"? Anyone livin' in Florida knows what I'm talkin about - they're everywhere!! OLD people with blue hair. They simply can't see the blue. Get the cataracts removed & replace them w/ 'synthetic/ artificial lenses & whammo patients are amazed at the newly realized colors! Holy geriatric! - it's time to go to the hairstylist to get a new hair dye job.

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