

Give Patients a Positive Experience

A proactive recommendation can enhance a patient's contact lens experience

Just as he recommends a specific brand of contact lens to match a patient's needs and lifestyle, **Tim Miller, O.D.**, of Raleigh, N.C., also specifically recommends a multipurpose solution to help take care of it. Often, that's OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH®



Dr. Miller

MPDS. "If I were to say it doesn't matter what kind of solution they use, patients might think solutions are all the same," Dr. Miller says. They're not, and he explains that he prescribes the contact lens

brand and solution brand as a package.

Compliance to lens care—cleaning and replacement instructions—is important. Don't skimp on any part of the process, he says. "I tell patients that I have a preference," he says. "When using OPTI-FREE RepleniSH solution, most patients can tell that

their lenses are comfortable, even at the end of the day." Explaining proper lens care procedures reinforces the need for patients to be compliant—an important message for new and long-time contact lenses wearers alike.

When converting patients to newer silicone hydrogel lenses, Dr. Miller explains that OPTI-FREE RepleniSH MPDS is biocompatible with the new lens materials. He says it's the best

match. "You wouldn't use a glass cleaner on a wood floor—you want the proper product for the material you are treating," Dr. Miller says.

He advises patients to stay away from generic store brands, saying the formulations may vary. Dr. Miller's Alcon rep provides him with coupons for all contact lens patients, which also helps direct them to the correct product on the shelf. ■

There's a Script on the Box

More than 35 percent of contact lens disinfectant buyers purchase private-label solutions, which may not be the most biocompatible solution for their lens material.^{1,2} In addition, contact lens patients may not be compliant on how they're caring for their lenses. The average contact lens patient should be using 10 bottles of solution per year—yet the average number of bottles purchased is just more than three.

Patients are not entirely to blame. They may be non-compliant because they don't know better. Reading out loud from an OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH® MPDS starter kit is an easy way to educate patients and provide a consistent message.

See Your Doctor Yearly For Healthy Vision: Checking the health of your eyes is as important as an annual physical.

Retains Moisture for Enhanced Comfort: The doctor prescribes this solution because it will help your new contact lenses feel comfortable and stay moist longer.

For silicone hydrogel and soft contact lenses: This solution is formulated specifically for the newer contact lens materials.

#1 Doctor Prescribed: This patented formula is not sold under any other name. Always consult with your eye care professional before changing lens care solutions. Not all contact lens solutions are the same. That is why the doctor recommends this one for your eyes. Also, remember to air-dry your case and never top off solution.

Use this box as part of your compliance message. ■



Cancun's Calling

The 2009 ALLDocs annual meeting will be held at Le Blanc Spa Resort in Cancun, Mexico, Nov. 15-19. Details and the ALLDocs membership and meeting registration forms are on alldocsod.com. ■

¹ Data referenced from Contact Lens Research Services at StainingGrid.com. Accessed May 15, 2009.

² Nielsen HH Panel, year ending November 2008

Promote Your Medical Services

O.D. blogs to the world and receives award

It's one thing to say annual exams are important in assessing eye health. It's quite another to have a

patient on video telling the world that an eye exam may have saved her life. While **Dawn Bearden, O.D.**, of Pembroke Pines and Sunrise, Fla., is not the only optometrist who discovered a dangerous health condition during the course of the exam, she may be one of the few who encourages patients to record a testimonial on a web cam at her front desk.

And that's just what patient **Judy McNab** did. McNab, an hyperope, never had regular eye exams until she was in

her 40s. But she stopped by Dr. Bearden's office one day in 2005 for an exam after losing her glasses. She wanted a



Tech-savvy Dr. Bearden

quick prescription update so she could order new eyeglasses at LensCrafters next door and have them that day. McNab was asymptomatic, but Dr. Bearden conducted a thorough and comprehensive exam and encouraged McNab to take a visual field assessment. Because of abnormal findings

on the baseline visual field analysis, Dr. Bearden suspected a tumor in her eye and insisted McNab see an ophthalmologist. That M.D. referred her to the Bascom Palmer Institute in Miami, where the

Dr. Bearden on the Web

Dr. Dawn Bearden is a big believer in the power of the Internet. "It is important to get stories out into the community and to people around the world on the blog," Dr. Bearden says. "This is how you educate the population now."

Here are the social networking sites she uses, above and beyond her web site, visionaryeyecareonline.com; visionaryeyecareblog.com; twitter.com/visionaryeyes; and Facebook pages under the profile names of **Dawn Bearden** and **Visionary Eyecare**.

Dr. Bearden also teaches a course in social media marketing for optometrists on eyecareedge.com. ■

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Shake Off the Cold

Here's to hoping that all of you who have seen a negative impact from the economy also are starting to see it level off. Your ALLDocs board remains optimistic,

in part because our spirits are buoyed by excitement about our 2009 annual meeting to be held in Cancun, Nov. 15-19.

We encourage you to make your plans and reservations now because we think it's an important meeting. In fact, it's always important to assess your practice to see that you're bringing quality and efficiency to your processes. It's even more important in a down economy. While no one can afford to be wasteful, it is equally important not to let opportunities pass you by.

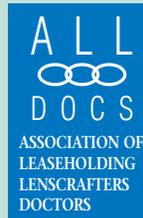


Dr. Gelb

Our annual meeting is such an opportunity-laden event. Talk with your colleagues to find out what's working in their practices. Spend time with our partner vendors who work so hard with us and for us to grow our practices. Learn about electronic medical records, e-commerce and other increasingly important technologies.

A tentative agenda can be found in this issue—and look for updates in the next issue of *ALLDocs*. The annual meeting is your best opportunity of the year to combine learning with fun in a glorious setting. We hope to see you there. ■

Kerry Gelb, O.D.
drkmg@comcast.net



tumor was destroyed, apparently before it affected any other organ or tissue. She even retained 20/25 vision in that eye.

McNab has recorded a short and longer version of her testimonial on Dr. Bearden's web cam, and both of these are among the patient testimonials on Dr. Bearden's web site and blog. Dr. Bearden takes the initiative to ask patients to share these stories because they can help the staff and all site visitors. As she wrote on her blog, introducing McNab's testimonial, "Judy reminds us all that yearly eye exams are very important to help detect eye health issues that you may be unaware of—since many eye health issues do not cause symptoms and can only be detected by a comprehensive eye exam."

In March, LensCrafters honored Dr. Bearden for her public education efforts at its annual summit in Nashville, Tenn. Her award recognized her as "an amazing clinician, entrepreneur and guru when it comes to using the Internet for promoting eye care. Spend two minutes on her web site, and you'll be emotionally connected to her, her practice, her patients and her cause: educating the public on the importance of preserving sight." ■

New Lenses Make Patients Want to Return

Consumers want new and improved products, and contact lens wearers are consumers as well as patients. By providing education on new technology and allowing patients to try new contact lens materials, O.D.s can appeal to patients' interest in having the latest, greatest products.

Two ALLDocs members say that's part of the appeal of the new Biofinity[®] Toric lens from CooperVision. While keeping patients interested and aware of new products is terrific from a practice-building standpoint, the greater appeal for both is that the lens works so well clinically.



Dr. Lutz

Steve Lutz, O.D., of Ann Arbor, Mich., has been watching how patients in his practice respond to the Biofinity Toric lens compared to another soft toric lens. "Eighty percent prefer Biofinity Toric," he says. "CooperVision has the best soft lens polymer. It's super wettable and soft, not stiff. That's the big advantage of the Biofinity material over other silicone hydrogel lenses."

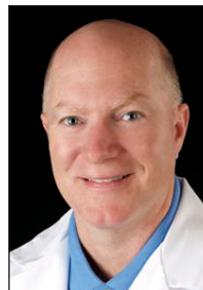
The lens combines the excellent Biofinity material with the Biomedics[®] Toric lens design—which CooperVision improved, Dr. Lutz says. "The company improved the bull's-eye optical zone in the Biofinity Toric. I think it's the best toric lens we have," he says.

Dr. Lutz anticipates that the lens is going to have a major impact on his practice. "On about 80 percent of my toric lens patients, it works perfectly. It's my go-to lens," he says.

Jack McIntyre, O.D., of Corpus Christi, Texas, agrees. "I like everything about the new Biofinity Toric—its third-generation, high-oxygen material; the comfort; and the crisp vision," he says. "We present it as a new and healthy alternative to the patients' older toric lenses. When we explain the benefits of the new toric, patients readily accept the recommendation."

That has made the Biofinity Toric the lens of first choice for the practice's astigmatic patients. Being able to offer patients new lenses that may be better suited to their lifestyle or wearing schedule and that offer greater comfort is important to these practitioners. Dr. Lutz says, "I want to have the newest and best technologies because patients notice that. The last thing I want to do is have them leave with the same lenses they've been wearing for years." If they do that, patients will wonder why they're returning. "I keep telling CooperVision's R&D guys: Come up with new stuff," Dr. Lutz says. "It makes us look good."

Learn more about the Biofinity Toric lens by visiting coopervision.com. You can order trial lenses and Rx product, or call your local rep if you are interested in a fitting set. Reach Tom Nicholson at tnicholson@coopervision.com or by calling 317.417.0677. ■



Dr. McIntyre

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Viva Mexico

2009 ALLDocs annual meeting agenda is taking shape

Sunday, November 15

- ◆ Arrivals
- ◆ Noon: Lunch for golfers at the Riviera Cancun Golf Course
- ◆ 1:30 p.m.: Shotgun start for annual golf tournament
- ◆ 5:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.: Welcome reception



Monday, November 16

- ◆ Meetings in the morning
- ◆ Lunch and learn
- ◆ Afternoon free
- ◆ 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.: Dinner/Vendor Fair

Tuesday, November 17

- ◆ Meetings all day
- ◆ 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.: Dinner/Vendor Fair

Wednesday, November 18

- ◆ Meetings in the morning
- ◆ Lunch and learn
- ◆ Afternoon free
- ◆ Gala dinner event on site

Thursday, November 19

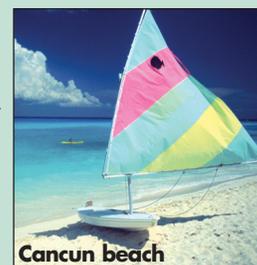
- ◆ American Optometric Association
- ◆ LensCrafters
- ◆ Business meeting
- ◆ Meeting concludes at noon ■

What to Do on Your Free Afternoons

A free afternoon is built into the ALLDocs annual meeting agenda for Monday and Wednesday. There's a lot to do in Cancun.

Here's a sampling.

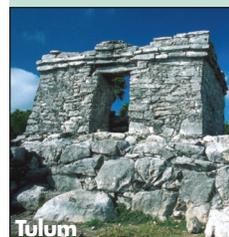
- ◆ There are 19 miles of beaches in Cancun, and the weather averages 78 degrees.
- ◆ Tulum, the only walled city built by the Mayans, is one



Cancun beach

of several Mayan ruins.

- ◆ Two ecological parks, Xcaret and Xel-Ha, are nearby.
- ◆ Swim with dolphins at Wet n' Wild right in Cancun. ■



Tulum

IMPLEMENTING THE TOTAL PATIENT CARE MODEL**The Challenge Continues**

By John Rumpakis, O.D., M.B.A.

Last quarter I dared you to commit yourself to change by incorporating the medical model into your practice and seeing how it changed not only the level of care that you provide to your patients and their perception of you, but also how benchmarking your practice metrics can add to your bottom line.

The first three months of 2009 have proven to be a very difficult economic time for many. Our country has been in a severe economic downturn where many long-time, iconic businesses have simply closed and gone away. While eye care practices have experienced many of these changes, too, those practices that have successfully integrated and implemented some of the basic principles of medical eye care have fared much better than their refractive-only counterparts.

For those of you who are still hesitant to incorporate medical eye care into your practices and who continue to focus mainly on spectacle and contact lens exams, you may want to consider this management issue to boost your short-term and long-term revenue: contact lens dropouts cost you and your practice significant revenues if you are not tracking and retaining these patients in your practice. If contact lens patients are important to your practice—and of course, they are—read on.

A contact lens patient has far more value to your practice than you might suspect. Not only do

contact lens patients contribute to the bottom line by having more frequent visits to the practice, they also contribute in other ways: they are more compliant with annual examination schedules; they order plano sunglasses and backup spectacles; they purchase contact lens care products; and they also may have allergies, dry eye and eye infections that you can diagnose and treat. These expenditures all can be factored in to the value of these patients.

A great online tool to determine the value of a contact lens patient to your practice is available, for free, at GLCAC.PracticeResourceMgmt.com. This Contact Lens Annuity Calculator will not only calculate the specific value of a contact lens patient to your practice, it will also allow you to compare your practice data to other practices in the U.S. and to other eye care businesses on a global basis. That's invaluable information to have, and you will never look at your contact lens patient in the same way after going through this brief interview process—I guarantee it!

So c'mon—I dare ya! Again. Start looking at every facet within your practice for ways to change, innovate and improve. Stop wishing for things to get better, and start playing an active role in making sure that your practice doesn't simply survive—but thrive... C'mon, I dare ya... ■



Dr. Rumpakis

REGISTER TODAY
for the 2009 ALLDocs Annual Meeting

"All Inclusive: Aqui, Ahora"
Le Blanc Hotel and Spa

Sunday, November 15 – Thursday, November 19

ACT NOW: Deadline for guaranteed rooms at discounted rate – August 23, 2009.

Don't wait. This resort will sell out.

You must be a paid member of ALLDocs to attend the meeting. A membership form is available at alldocsod.com or from Heather; hkreidler@foxeyecare.com, 919.792.2347. Doctors who attend all lectures and the vendor fair and stay at Le Blanc will receive a rebate after the meeting.

Visit alldocsod.com for the registration form, hotel information and help with travel arrangements.