

Third Time's A Charm

Repeat important information three times for full patient comprehension

Jonathan M. Schonfeld, OD, of Cleveland, Ohio, believes that it's critical that patients hear important messages three times. That amount of repetition is key to retention, he says. So in his office, a conversation about contact lens care and compliance is introduced three times—once by the technicians before the eye exam, once by the doctor in the exam lane and once by the contact lens technicians after the exam. "Everyone is on the same message

point," Dr. Schonfeld says.

Here's how it works. As technicians conduct pretesting, they will ask patients what brand multipurpose solution they use. If the patient isn't certain, the technicians will remind them that the doctors recommend specific brand-name solutions for a reason, namely to minimize the chance of an interaction with their contact lenses.

In the exam room, Dr. Schonfeld



Dr. Schonfeld

talks about the importance of using the name brand solution, such as OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH® Multi-Purpose Disinfecting Solution. "I tell patients that there are many store brands on the market, but OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH® solution isn't sold under any other brand name. So they can

be sure of what's in the bottle," he says. That's important for the patients

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Meeting Sets Doctors up for Year of Changes

For the past decade since **Michael Steck, OD**, opened his Milwaukee, Wis., LensCrafters-based practice, he's attended the ALLDocs annual meeting on alternate years. "I would like to go to each and every one of them, but the demands of a growing practice and growing family keep me from doing that," he says. To Dr. Steck, shutting the office for a few days is worth it. "Like most of the attendees, I am grateful for the opportunity to hear from LensCrafters corporate and to work toward a common goal of providing excellent care and premium products to our patients," he says.

Dr. Steck appreciates the generosity of the vendors and diligent efforts of the ALLDocs leadership that make each

annual meeting possible. "It's always been an experience where I learn and take something back," he says. "Sometimes we have common problems, and sometimes we don't. But the ingenuity and way that these doctors solve their problems is very clever and thoughtful."

Dr. Steck and his wife and practice partner, **Maria Steck, OD**, attend the meetings together. Here's what they enjoyed about

the 2010 ALLDocs annual meeting.

◆ Web site and social media.

Even before attending last year, Dr. Michael Steck thoroughly reviewed the package he received from Eye-CarePro on marketing, practice web sites and social media. His web site, which he's had since he opened the

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Dr. Maria Steck and Dr. Michael Steck

Save the Date



The 2011 ALLDocs annual meeting will be held Oct. 16-20 at the Boca Raton Resort and Club, a Waldorf Astoria property. Look for more information soon. ■

Year of Changes

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practice in 2001, isn't very sophisticated, he says. "We don't get a lot of action." He's looking to change that by redesigning the site completely, creating a place for his practice on social media platforms and also adding his practice location to map services such as Google Maps.

◆ **Electronic health records (EHR).** Dr. Steck is transitioning to EHRevolution, a web-based EHR

system. It's the first to sync with the LensCrafters e-appointment book, which is a great benefit for Dr. Steck. "I'm in the office most days, but when I'm out I can check in remotely to monitor the staff, patient flow and scheduling," he says. "It's wonderful, and that's just one of the beauties of this system."

◆ **Keynote speaker.** "We enjoyed the opportunity to meet **Dr. Dean Ornish** and have applied much of his advice to our lives,"



Dr. Ornish

Dr. Steck says, adding that he's purchased Dr. Ornish's book *The Spectrum* and started to incorporate different foods into his family's diet.

◆ **Vendor interaction.**

Dr. Steck took time to meet with several vendors so he could learn about what they had to offer his practice in the future. For example, he chatted with **Dr. Larry Alexander** about the Optovue OCT he plans to integrate into the practice this year.

◆ **Location.** Each year the venues are impressive, and 2010 in Laguna Beach, Calif., was no exception. "We had a phenomenal time," Dr. Steck says. "The resort was a terrific venue, and we were blessed with exceptional weather."

For many reasons, Dr. Steck makes a point of attending the ALLDocs annual meeting. "I enjoy seeing the wisdom of people who have done this longer, and the energy of the doctors who are younger," he says. "Most of these doctors are very progressive thinkers and willing to try new things, and that's what separates them from other practitioners." ■

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Live and Virtual Networking



Dr. Gelb

The ALLDocs annual meeting in California this past November provided many excellent opportunities for networking. I am still hearing from ALLDocs members who tell me how much they enjoyed the camaraderie and the chance to share business strategies with like-minded professionals.

But I also came away with a renewed commitment to embrace Internet marketing for my practice. CooperVision has been instrumental in helping our members begin to navigate and utilize the confusing aspects of social media, and the company can help you get started with this important marketing endeavor. Please view my practice Facebook page, for example, at facebook.com/contactlensandvision.

More patients are using the Internet to research and purchase contact lenses, and more than one member has suggested we need to continue to keep patients educated about the quality of our services and explain that all contact lenses sold through our offices are purchased from the manufacturer and not through a grey market. The issue of grey market lenses available online will be one of our primary focuses for 2011. I encourage you send me your strategies so we can share with other members.

These and other practice-building strategies will be discussed in future issues of *ALLDocs* and at our next ALLDocs annual meeting to be held in October in Florida. Please be sure to mark your calendar now, as your ALLDocs board is already at work to ensure that the meeting brings you the high levels of CE, practice management information and networking time that you've come to expect from these meetings.


Kerry Gelb, OD
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What's New on Our Web Site



Do you want to join the ALLDocs group? Need to renew your ALLDocs membership? You can pay your dues online at alldocsod.com. While you're there, you can look up contact information for other ALLDocs members, watch a webinar on search engine optimization, read blog entries on social media and web-based marketing and find updates on the ALLDocs annual meeting.

The web site also features special promotions for ALLDocs members from vendor partners. So check back often. ■

Focus on Business

ALLDocs meeting provides a chance to think ahead on practice goals

Each year that **Michael Dopkiss, OD**, of Powell, Ohio, goes to an ALLDocs annual meeting, he thinks to himself, "It can't get better than this!" Then he returns and, "sure enough, the next meeting is even better," he says, noting that the 2010 meeting in California may have been the best yet. The resort itself should get six stars, he says. "The rooms and views are beautiful, and the food and services top shelf. This sets the stage for the chemistry of camaraderie of fellow doctors sharing information and best practices that help transform us into being the best at what we do, and helping to prepare us in providing world-class vision care."

As a result of that meeting, Dr. Dopkiss and his practice partner, **Shimul Y. Shah, OD**, established



Dr. Dopkiss

some practice goals for 2011.

◆ **Integrate social media and the practice web site.** "We are proud of our practice and want to share our care and direction with the community," he says. He appreciates CooperVision's presentation at the meeting, which promised to shorten the learning curve in marketing a practice through social media. "Social media marketing is still in its infancy in offering new and exciting ways to attract new patients, foster patient loyalty, enhance profits and demonstrate our ability to differentiate our practices to gain a competitive advantage."

◆ **Increase contact lens sales by increasing awareness of all the newest contact lens choices and innovations.** For example, the doctors

actively promote the option of daily disposable contact lenses as a supplemental Rx for two-week or monthly replacement contact lenses. It's a fun way to offer the wearing option to patients, who may choose to buy some daily disposable lenses for occasional use.

◆ **Continue to develop and integrate the medical model and to practice at the highest level consistent with state law.** "Our ALLDocs organization facilitates this constantly by offering the best speakers at our annual meetings," he says, adding that the board has developed unique and important vendor partner opportunities, such as this *ALLDocs* publication. "Alcon has been a leader in optometry advocacy through its repertoire of both prescription and over-the-counter pharmaceuticals and solutions and through its policies supporting the optometric profession." ■

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and for his office. "If you have a problem with your contact lenses, we cannot rule out solution-related issues if you keep changing solutions," he tells them. By staying with what he has recommended, it will make troubleshooting, if necessary, a simpler and faster process.

Dr. Schonfeld also tells patients that from his standpoint, he believes OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH® solution is their best option. "That's based on scientific data from the Andrasko Staining Grid^{1,2} and responses from my patients who say it keeps their contact lenses feeling more comfortable," he says. The doctor adds a notation on the contact lens exam form specifying which contact lens solution brand has been recommended, as well as any that have not worked for that patient in the past.

All contact lens patients, whether

they're new or long-time wearers, receive the same instructions before leaving the office. "Existing contact lens wearers are the ones who may have developed noncompliant habits with contact lens care and cleaning," Dr. Schonfeld says. Making penny-wise but pound-foolish choices, they may stretch their contact lens wear, top off solutions or opt to buy cheaper, store-brand solutions.

So the instructions are repeated a third time. New contact lens patients and those who have strayed away from the recommended solution are handed an OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH® MPDS starter kit, and all contact lens patients receive a coupon for the purchase of OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH® solution. ■



¹ Andrasko G, Ryen K. Corneal staining and comfort observed with traditional and silicone hydrogel lenses and multipurpose solution combinations. *Optometry*. 2008;79(8): 444-454.

² Data referenced from Contact Lens Research Services at StainingGrid.com; accessed January 4, 2011

OneSight Schedule

Since 1988, OneSight has visited dozens of countries and North American cities, hand-delivering vision care and eyewear. In 2011, OneSight has as a goal to create sustainable eye care programs that complement the efforts of local governments and health organizations. Trips are planned to global clinics in Thailand, India, the Gambia, China, Mexico, Paraguay and South Africa.



Alcon's Ed Zajac was part of the recent OneSight mission to South Africa.

OneSight makes return trips to many U.S. cities including Los Angeles, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland and Fishkill, N.Y., as well as making first-time visits to New Orleans and Minneapolis. ■

IMPLEMENTING THE TOTAL PATIENT CARE MODEL

Back to the Future



Dr. Rumpakis

By John Rumpakis, OD, MBA

Out with the old, in with the new—so starts every New Year as the saying goes. Unfortunately, in so many cases we tend to get complacent and forget that the old things can really be important to our success. Let's take our contact lens patients, for example. How often do you put as much energy into really WOW-ing an old patient as compared to your efforts in impressing a potential new contact lens patient? So many times we take them for granted, as they have been faithful patients for years, purchasing their annual supplies and being loyal to your practice.

Yet, how often do we really try and impress them by keeping them abreast of the best and latest technology in contact lenses? When innovation stops, disinterest begins. These patients are always looking, albeit passively in some cases, for the best technology in both lens materials and lens care. They have a lifestyle that has adjusted itself to contact lenses, a lifestyle that has actively rejected refractive surgery. So we owe them a commitment

to keep them front of mind.

How you communicate with these patients is critical, in fact more so than how often you communicate with them. Make each patient feel that he or she is the only one in your universe for the short period of time that you actually spend together. Provide each patient with your best, too, giving the benefit of all of your education, expertise and experience. These patients will reward you many times over. They are also the base of your referral network, whether for refractive care, contact lenses or medical eye care.

But don't ever assume that these patients will be forever loyal, they won't drop out of contact lenses or simply leave your practice for someone else who will provide them with the WOW factor that they once loved about your practice. Remember that when you assume, you make an "ass of u and me."

So as we start 2011, let's turn the old mantra on its head: in with the old and in with the new. Keep patients in your practice by keeping them happy and successful. It is as big of a challenge today as it has ever been. So don't get complacent—keep the WOW factor front and center, and you and your patients will benefit. See you next quarter... ■

Smart Kit Management

Not every contact lens patient should get a starter kit. All new contact lens patients should receive one, as should those who have strayed from the OD's recommended solution. All patients should receive contact lens and contact lens care education, and existing patients should always be re-educated. Since compliant patients currently using the product should already have that product at home, providing more "free solution" could detract from a patient's routine of purchasing the retail size product. Furthermore, offices should never hand out multiple kits.

ODs should prescribe the MPDS that they feel is most appropriate for the patient. During and after the contact lens exam, doctors and staff should provide consistent messaging on which

solution the doctor recommends and why. It can be as simple as saying, "The doctor wants you only to use OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH® MPDS because it is biocompatible with your new silicone hydrogel contact lenses. Patients say they find the right solution brand can enhance their contact lens-wearing experience. So do not switch solution brands without calling our office first."

Contact lens solution choice can make a difference in contact lens comfort. OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH® solution not only cleans and disinfects contact lenses, it also reconditions contact lenses so they retain moisture for enhanced comfort.

There are differences in multipurpose solutions; even if the cartons look similar, the product ingredients and concentration can be different. Remind patients

that store-brand solution formulations can also change periodically. Alcon's OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH® solution is not sold as any store-brand product.

Even if patients remember your directions, they may fall into bad habits, such as topping off solutions in the lens case. It only takes a minute to review the care and cleaning regimen of contact lenses. Your message must be compelling enough to change consumers' bad habits and make them throw away the solution at home if it is not the one you prescribed. This critical educational review with existing contact lens patient can maximize the patients' experience, will reduce contact lens dropouts in your office and you will find your experienced patients will have a higher level of appreciation. ■