

TOTAL EYE CARE
BERTRAM KRAFT, MD

DEAR TOTAL EYE CARE PATIENT

Hello to all and a Happy Labor Day

Please take some time out to view my new website at www.drbkraft.com.

KID STUFF

Now that summer is over and school is starting, I want to remind all parents that “school eye exams” are not a substitute for the real thing. A recent journal article describes how the school tests do a fairly decent job of detecting children with nearsightedness and perceptual problems (crossed eyes, lazy eyes, etc) but fail miserably in detecting the farsighted kids. A 13 year old 8th grader in the office today was a perfect example of someone who needed glasses but was missed. Kids and adults too who have to strain to see have difficulty with concentration and comprehension.

Some of you may have seen me on the Channel 7 Early Morning Show last year talking about the new vision exam requirement for beginning kindergarteners’. As you may know, Dr. Schmitt and I exam people of all ages.

ADULT STUFF

Some of you may have seen the article in the Wall Street Journal on August 17th entitled “Becoming a Squinter Nation” by Melinda Beck. She brings to the fore something that I have been preaching about for 15 years – the relationship between our environment, our work and play time and the tasks we demand of our vision in this digital age. We are all unique individuals with our own set of visual needs. Although people follow certain patterns, I need to know which one is yours. Then, I can help to put your eyes at rest and make you a more relaxed person. Strained vision leads to a stressful life. (A little personal aside: When my daughter got married earlier this year I told her husband the following: A happy wife is a happy life)

Computers, Blackberries, I-pods, etc are stressing out our eyes. Our brain says, do this! , read that! etc. and we automatically set into motion a cascade of physical events that lead to vision. The younger we are, the longer we can keep this up comfortably. But, as we get older (think 35

years and up), fatigue sets in sooner and the body reacts with headaches, eye strain, dry eyes, a stiff neck, general malaise and tiredness, to name a few problems. The intensity of these problems varies with the refractive error of our eyes.

The article points out that there are many corrective options:

- Computer glasses
- Contact lenses – bifocal and monovision
- Occupational glasses
- Corrective Laser surgery – intralase
- Cataract surgery with multifocal lenses

Bottom Line

We can help with these things that you didn't even realize were coming from your eyes.

DIABETES MELLITUS

Diabetes is characterized by a high blood sugar (glucose) level that is the result of a defect in the body's ability to either produce or use insulin. Insulin is needed to transport glucose from the blood stream into the cells of our body to give them the energy to function. Without insulin, the body does not use or store the glucose properly and the high levels damage the blood vessel throughout the whole body.

Type 1 diabetes is usually discovered in childhood and was previously called juvenile diabetes. It can be hereditary or as a result of an infection.

Type 2 diabetes is the adult onset variety. Risk factors here include:

- Age over 45
- Family history
- Overweight
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Certain racial and ethnic groups

Because the blood vessels in the eye are readily visible on my exam, damage there probably indicates damage in other parts of the body as well. When the eye's retinal blood vessels are damaged, the condition is called diabetic retinopathy. This condition is one of the leading causes of blindness but most cases can be prevented if the medical guidelines of yearly dilated eye exams are followed.

There are two types of diabetic retinopathy and I will discuss them in the next newsletter.

Bottom Line:

The lower the blood sugar levels and the tighter control you can keep, the lower the incidence and severity of the retinopathy.

MONDAY and THURSDAY EVENING APPOINTMENTS are now available with in the Buffalo Grove office. Call for available times and dates.

If you have any questions or comments, I would be delighted to hear from you. Please email me at: DrBKraft@BKraftMD.com. Many common questions can be answered by visiting our website at www.drbkraft.com.

If it has been a while since your last exam, please do not hesitate to call today to inquire about scheduling your next appointment. For your convenience, you can now email either office to arrange an appointment. E-mail the Buffalo Grove office at ReceptionBG@BKraftMD.com.

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