



What's New in Ophthalmology Today?

Dementia and Vision

“Elderly people with visual disorders that are left untreated are significantly more likely to develop Alzheimer’s disease” according to Dr. Mary Rogers at the University of Michigan, reported in Science Daily. “I think what was most surprising in our work is that treating visual disorders appeared to delay the diagnosis of dementia” said Dr. Rogers. One of the important points made in this study was that patients with poor vision who visited an ophthalmologist at least once were 65% less likely to develop dementia. Visual problems are common among the elderly population. Unfortunately, poor vision can lead to dementia. Dr. Rogers lists the types of treatment that were helpful in lowering the risk of dementia. These included “surgery to correct cataracts and treatments for glaucoma, retinal disorders and other eye related problems” according to Science Daily.

Good vision is necessary for people to do many important activities such as reading, word games and puzzles, social interaction and physical activities such as exercise and getting around. Poor vision precludes maximum participation in these activities. 90% of people did not know that glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy do not have any symptoms and will destroy significant amounts of vision before the patient realizes what has happened. The bottom line according to Medscape reporting on this paper is the

“Ophthalmologic abnormalities are common in patients with dementia... and untreated poor vision may intensify cognitive decline.” Yearly visits to the ophthalmologist is critical for your total well being.

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