



# What's New in Ophthalmology Today?

## GOLD

**Gold**, according to Eye World Magazine (Nov.'7), was used in the treatment of such medical disorders as measles, skin ulcers, and smallpox in the ancient cultures. More recently, gold has been used to treat arthritis and in Japan people are using a gold-titanium patch for pain relief. Gold is used on various medical devices such as catheters and is used to fill teeth. *Gold is also used in ophthalmology.* In a condition known as paralytic lagophthalmos, the patient is unable to close his eyes completely thus leaving the cornea exposed and allowing infection and scarring to occur. By inserting a small gold weight beneath the skin of the lid the surgeon makes the lid "heavier". When the patient blinks, the muscle holding the eyelid up relaxes, and the lid "falls down" that is it closes and protects the cornea.

Another new device is a small pure gold shunt which is used to treat open angle glaucoma. Typically in glaucoma, the pressure is elevated in the eye and this is associated with damage to the optic nerve. The **SOLX Solid Gold Shunt** is inserted into the eye in the operating room. It connects the high pressure front part of the eye, the anterior chamber, with a low pressure area in the back part of the eye, the suprachoroidal space as explained by Kristine Morrill and Zara Barias. The shunt has many small channels and they ultimately control the flow of fluid and the pressure in the anterior chamber.

Gold is being used in tumor research and treatments, pacemakers and drug delivery microchips. Gold has a future.

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