



What's New in Ophthalmology Today?

Freckles, Moles, and Melanoma of the Eye

Light skinned people with many freckles and skin moles - (which develop when the skin is over exposed to ultraviolet (UV) light) - are at greater risk for developing melanomas of the skin. Ezekial Weis, MD, PhD in this month's journal *Ophthalmology* reports that **skin moles and freckles also indicate a higher risk of melanomas of the eye - cancer of the iris, ciliary body and choroid.** About six million people a year develop melanoma of the eye. Ocular melanoma has a high mortality rate and remains asymptomatic in its early stages. **A yearly comprehensive eye exam can detect these tumors when they are very small. Effective treatment is available if detected early.**

Dr. Weis identified the risk factors as: 1. people aged 70 or older; 2. with light skin and eye color; and 3. a tendency to sunburn.

“Our study points to an interaction of genetic susceptibility and environmental insult in the form of UV exposure.” Given this information Dr. Ezekial believes **that people can take actions such as limiting exposures to UV light and this may be important in this disease.**

Everyone should protect their bodies from excessive Ultraviolet light exposure. People with numerous moles or freckles need to be vigilant; those at risk would benefit from a yearly eye examination for ocular melanoma. **Early detection can make all the difference.**

RAANANAH S. KATZ, M.D., F.A.C.S.

**1776 N. Pine Island Road, Suite 214
Plantation, FL 33322**

866.295.9984

*Board Certified American Board of Ophthalmology
Fellow American College of Surgeons
Fellowship and Resident Training
at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute*

New York Times Super Doctor

www.katzeyeinstitute.com