



DISCOVERY

THE DISCOVERY EYE FOUNDATION

Summer 2012

The Discovery Eye Foundation supports research, education and advocacy related to sight-threatening eye diseases and their treatments, improving the quality of life for patients and their families.

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CLINICAL RESEARCH

The Discovery Eye Foundation exists primarily to support research related to sight-threatening eye diseases and their treatments. As we've mentioned in recent e-newsletters, each of our newsletters this year focuses on one of four stages of research:

1. Discovery Research
2. Translational Research
3. Clinical Research
4. Regulatory Application and Approval

This issue focuses on Stage 3: clinical research. This stage conducts research in humans, in the hopes of moving drugs, vaccines and procedures to approval for patients. In addition to testing effectiveness, clinical trials provide information on potential reactions and/or side effects.

Clinical research is usually broken into three phases: Phase 1 examines safety; Phase 2 assesses efficacy and correct dosing; and Phase 3 tests broader efficacy, develops usage guidelines and compares the product to existing products. During these three phases, the number of people on which a product is tested grows from as few as 20 people to several thousand. According to the Center for Accelerating Medical Solutions, "Clinical development of a single product through all three phases takes six to seven years on average, and only one out of five compounds that enter clinical trials will be approved for use in patients."

The cost of human clinical trials is exponentially higher — in the hundreds of millions of dollars — than the previous stages of research, and government funds are hard to come by for this stage.

DEF supports research to help get projects to this stage. Corneal cross-linking, which is discussed below, is an example of a current clinical research project.

Stopping KC in its Tracks

Clinical trials for crosslinking

"It's the biggest advance in keratoconus research in the past 50–100 years," says Ronald N. Gaster, MD, FACS, a clinical professor of ophthalmology at the Gavin Herbert Eye Institute at the University of California, Irvine, who is also in private practice. "Previously, we had to watch patients through the years get progressively worse until they needed a corneal transplant. And yes, transplants usually have good results, but corneal crosslinking lets you avoid a big operation ... and a number of studies both here and in Europe have reported that it can stop the progression of the disease."

Corneal crosslinking (CXL) strengthens the cornea by using riboflavin eye drops and ultraviolet light, which cause free radicals to be released and the cornea to crosslink between the collagen fibrils, making them more rigid. DEF is supporting laboratory research that is helping to advance CXL technology. The procedure has been approved in many medical centers around the world — but not yet in the United States. [Read more.](#)

MEET THE RESEARCHER



Ronald Gaster, MD, FACS

Ronald N. Gaster, MD, FACS, is a professor at the Gavin Herbert Eye Institute at the University of California, Irvine. He is a board-certified ophthalmologist, a fellowship-trained corneal and refractive surgeon, and a nationally recognized authority in the fields of corneal and refractive eye surgery, keratoconus and corneal cross-linking.

Gaster frequently lectures on the latest innovations in refractive, corneal and cataract microsurgery, both nationally and internationally, and has authored and contributed to many publications on advances in refractive, corneal and cataract surgery. He specializes in treatments

for keratoconus and post-LASIK ectasia, including Intacs and corneal cross-linking (CXL), and has pioneered advances in femtosecond laser-assisted corneal transplantation.

Gaster earned his BA from Cornell University and his MD from the UCLA School of Medicine. The recipient of numerous awards and commendations, Gaster most recently was included in 2012 *US News and World Report* "Top Doctors," "Best Doctors in America" and Orange County Medical Association Physicians of Excellence. He is a scientific referee for *American Journal of Ophthalmology* and was nominated by UC Irvine Medical Center as a Clinician of the Year in 2011.

BOARD PROFILES



On Board

Hart and Seretan join DEF board

The Discovery Eye Foundation is pleased to welcome two new members to its board of directors, Wendy J. Seretan and James E. Hart. To learn more about them and their interest in DEF, please [click here.](#)

Orange Ya Glad?

Adding sunshine to your diet

The sunny days of summer are perfect for exploring the variety of orange and yellow foods that can be good for your vision, reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and cancer, and help boost your immune system.

Orange fruits and vegetables contain beta-carotene, a powerful antioxidant that is food for eye health, delaying cognitive aging and protecting the skin from sun damage. Beta-carotene also converts to vitamin A, which is important for night vision and the health of your immune system. Orange foods contain vitamin C, another antioxidant that boosts the immune system and protects against cardiovascular disease. Yellow fruits and vegetables contain lutein, another nutrient important for healthy vision.

Try some of these ripe and rich goodies, perfect as they are:

- Sweet potatoes
- Carrots
- Pumpkin
- Apricots
- Cantaloupe
- Summer squash
- Citrus fruit
- Papayas
- Peaches and nectarines
- Sweet corn
- Yellow peppers
- Mangoes
- Pineapple
- Yellow tomatoes

If you're having difficulty incorporating more orange and yellow foods into your diet, here are some helpful tips:

- Replace French fries with crispy baked sweet potato slices.
- Keep dried apricots, pineapple or mangoes handy for a ready-to-eat snack.
- Add sweet potatoes to black beans or chili for a color and texture boost.
- Add yellow tomatoes to salsa or gazpacho to make these dishes even more healthy and colorful.

If you are feeling inspired (or not), check out the recipe for an [Apricot-Orange Breakfast Smoothie](#) on our website. And we suggest you enjoy these foods outside while getting some healthy sunshine (don't forget your sunscreen and sunglasses!).

Under the sun: new FDA sunscreen guidelines

Thanks to the FDA, consumers will have more accurate information in choosing which sunscreens will best protect them. Under new labeling regulations scheduled to go into effect this September, sunscreen products that pass the FDA's test for protection against both ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) rays can be labeled as "Broad Spectrum." Products that are labeled Broad Spectrum and have SPF values of 15 or higher may state they reduce the risk of skin cancer and early skin aging, when used as directed.

The new regs also limit the maximum SPF value on sunscreen labels to "50+" since "there is not sufficient data to show that products with SPF values higher than 50 provide greater protection for users than products with SPF values of 50," according to the FDA. Additionally, sunscreens can be called "water-resistant," but not water-proof or sweat-proof, since all sunscreens do wash off.

Pique your Pinterest?

The DEF team is having great fun posting interesting and helpful items to the new [DEF Pinterest board](#). To support our sunshine-y theme this summer, we've pinned up a collection of sunglasses and sun hats to protect your eyes from harsh rays. Well, some are more for fun than protection, but you get the idea. If you'd like to contribute and pin your own picks to the DEF board, please do. Check back often, as we'll continue to post new and exciting items we think you'll like.

VISION LEGACY

We Can Help With Your Estate Planning

DEF to host planned-giving webinars

DEF has started working with estate-planning professionals to help educate current and future members of Vision Legacy about making the best plans for The Discovery Eye Foundation and themselves. These professionals will be contributing to DEF's monthly [Planned Giving Newsletter](#), as well as conducting free, informative webinars for the whole DEF community. For more information and to sign up for our next Vision Legacy webinar on July 24 at noon PDT, please [click here](#).

We are very excited to have three new volunteers in this effort: Stan Sung, Matthew Yu and Erik Hendrickson (*pictured left to right*).

Stan Sung, CFP, is the president of GENRICH Inc. of Long Beach, Calif. GENRICH works with high-net-worth families and businesses to design customized financial solutions to protect assets and perpetuate wealth across multiple generations.

Matthew Yu is an attorney with the Law Office of Matthew C. Yu, in Torrance, Calif. His practice emphasizes probate, conservatorships and living trusts. His clients include businesses, families and individuals throughout Southern California.

Erik Hendrickson is a vice president in J.P. Morgan's Century City office and is responsible for advising high-income clients on investment and portfolio management, tax strategies and estate planning.



Advice for Safer Estate Plans

What to Keep in a Safe-Deposit Box

Learn what you should keep in a safe-deposit box — and what you shouldn't. [Read more](#).

Q&A: How Can My Gift Last Forever?

Would you like to extend your values by making a gift to DEF that will last indefinitely? Consider establishing an endowment. It's a powerful way to show your support while also realizing tax benefits for your kindness. [Read more](#).

Beware of These Inheritance Complications

You've worked hard with the intention of leaving behind something for those you care about. Unwittingly, you may be leaving less than you intend if your estate is subject to these snags.

[Read more.](#)

No Pressure: You Can Change Your Mind

We realize circumstances change and the gift you've planned in your estate may no longer be possible at some future date. Guess what! You can change your mind. [Read more.](#)

DEF NEWS



Discovery at the Movies

On April 22, The Discovery Eye Foundation honored Arthur Hiller, the director of *The Americanization of Emily*, with a screening of the 1964 classic.

After decades of sharing his vision through film and television, Hiller was diagnosed with AMD in 2006. During the post-film Q&A, Hiller shared that, by sitting in the front row of the theater to better access

the stage for the presentation, he discovered he could actually see a great deal of the movie. "After all the years of not going to the movies because I didn't think I could see them, I am going to try again by sitting in the front row."

Following his diagnosis, one of the many things Hiller found hard was reading the morning paper and all the books he'd previously enjoyed. To help, DEF presented him with a [ClearReader](#), generously donated by [Optelec](#). The ClearReader takes a picture of a page and converts it into a digital image that can make the text and photos much larger for easier viewing — it can even read the text to you. (pictured top: Optelec representatives Courtney Berg and John Wolfe, Arthur Hiller, Sid Ganis and Susan DeRemer)

Discovery at the Movies was the work of many people, but a special thank you goes out to Sid Ganis, Herb and Beverly Gelfand, Jack Schoellerman, David and Susan Boyer, and Tony Nesburn, who all helped make the event a success.

Discovery on TV

DEF-funded researcher Dr. Henry Klassen was interviewed on the PBS show "*Real Orange*". The episode highlighted advances in stem-cell research at UC Irvine. It aired on May 3, but had not yet been posted to the [PBS site](#) at press time.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monthly: Second Tuesday

AMD Support Group, Santa Monica

MDP Director Judi Delgado hosts a monthly support group for those with age-related macular degeneration. Ken Edwards Center, 10 am–noon. For more information or to RSVP, please call 310-623-4466 or e-mail contactus@amd.org.

Monthly: Fourth Wednesday

AMD Support Group, Beverly Hills

MDP Director Judi Delgado hosts a monthly support group for those with age-related macular degeneration. Roxbury Park Community Center, 1–2:30 pm. For more information or to RSVP, please call 310-623-4466 or e-mail contactus@amd.org.

Sept. 20–22, 2012

AARP Life@50+ National Event & Expo

Meet us in New Orleans this year! [More info](#).

Sept. 23–30, 2012

AMD Week

Plenty of events and info to raise awareness of macular degeneration. [More info](#).

Sept. 28, 2012

DEF Research-Lab Tour, UC Irvine

Free guided tour of our new laboratories. [More info](#).

