

Summary of the March, 2012, Program**“Healthy Eyes and Healthy Body”**

Presented by Catherine Ranges, C.O.T., O.ST.
Central Florida Eye Institute

The North Central Florida Post Polio Support Group welcomed Catherine Ranges, C.O.T.,O.ST. of the Central Florida Eye Institute as our guest speaker for March, 2012. Ms. Ranges is an associate of Dr. Thomas L. Croley, M.D. a Board Certified Ophthalmologist and the head of the Central Florida Eye Institute in Ocala.

Ms. Ranges presented a program explaining the importance of physical healthy in regard to having healthy eyes. Some of the leading causes of eye problems occur as a result of health problems and medications.

The central retinal artery is attached to the carotid artery and the brain, which is affected by strokes. The veins and arteries in the eyes are much smaller than in other parts of the body and need to be checked by an expert to determine if there are any changes. It is very important to be checked by an Ophthalmologist at least yearly, and more often if you have serious health issues such as diabetes or heart disease.

Many times, visual symptoms are trying to tell you about something else going on in your body. When you call to make an eye appointment, tell the office what is going on with your eyes. Sometimes the symptoms point to problems in another direction and you may be referred to a cardiologist or some other specialist. Medications can affect your eyes and may need to be adjusted.

Cataracts are the result of the lenses of your eyes changing. They become thicker and you can have difficulty seeing true colors. Your vision usually appears yellowed. In our 40s, our near vision usually changes requiring reading glasses. In our 60s and 70s, lenses may become cloudy or hazy and our glasses don't help anymore. The younger you are when you decide to have cataract surgery, on your doctor's recommendation, the quicker you can recover. Cataract surgery is 98% problem free. Don't be afraid to have it. It takes about 10 minutes to have a cataract removed.

Macular Degeneration effects central vision. The macula is what helps us ee fine detail and fine print. After cataract surgery, everything is sharper and you will notice macular degeneration more. Do not take vitamins for your eyes unless they are approved by your doctor, they can interact with your other medications and vitamins.

Women over 40 don't produce enough lubrication in their eyes resulting in dry eyes. Blood pressure medications can cause dry eyes. Working on a computer can cause dry eyes or excessive tears. Artificial tears have to be used several times a day.

Glaucoma can be helped by early detection. High eye pressure isn't the only indication that you may have glaucoma. People with a pressure of 10 can have glaucoma, while

people with a pressure of 28 may not have it. Laser treatment can reduce pressure as well as drops. These drops can go down your throat and affect your system.

Don't ever use drops that "get the red out." These drops constrict blood vessels. Exercising five minutes a day and eating one green "veggie" can improve your circulation. Dr. Croley's office encourages patients to exercise.

Our bodies change and our eyes are part of these changes. Senior groups have exercise programs available that can help. Use your bodies as much as you can in order to keep your eyes and body healthy.

Younger generations of today will not live as long as our older generation because of the lack of activity due to time spent on computers and with other electronic devices and because of the convenience of fast foods instead of fresh vegetables and fruits in their diets.

Glaucoma and macular degeneration are hereditary and the fairer your skin and the more birthdays you have place you at greater risk that you will develop one of these diseases. Wearing sunglasses and eating leafy green vegetables such as spinach and kale will help protect your eyes. The younger you are when you start wearing sunglasses, the more protected your eyes are.

Twenty five or thirty years ago, people went blind from cataracts, and it's not that they didn't have macular degeneration, they just couldn't see it because of the cataracts. Take advantage of the new technologies when having your eyes examined even if there are no symptoms.

Children should start going to an Ophthalmologist at age five and then age ten, in their teens and on into their twenties and thirties, and more often if a problems develop. You need to be established with an ophthalmologist in case of a major change in your vision. Your Optometrist can prescribe eyeglasses, but for diseases of the eye, for which an Optometrist cannot treat you, an Ophthalmologist should be consulted.

Unless you have had cataract surgery, you don't need new glasses every year unless you are having trouble with your current lenses or need new frames.

Dr. Croley's office staff focuses on education. They explain what the tests they use are for and how they work and his staff is very professional and caring. Catherine Ranges presented a very informative program and we are very grateful that she shared her expertise with our group. She answered questions and educated us about our eyes and we thank her for the time she spent with us.

Transcribed and summarized for the POLIO POST NEWS by Sharon Daszczyński
PPN MAR 2012