

OPHTHALMIC CONSULTANTS OF BOSTON

OCB VISIONS

December 2020



**We wish you and your families
a safe, healthy and happy holiday season!!
See important reminders below**

***To our diabetic and pre-diabetic patients,
please schedule your annual dilated eye exam.***



OCB eye doctors want to take this opportunity to remind our diabetic and pre-diabetic patients that an annual dilated eye exam is the best way to prevent vision loss due to eye conditions associated with diabetes. Diabetic retinopathy is a leading cause of blindness and has no early

symptoms, which makes eye exams especially important.

Your OCB eye doctor works closely with your primary care doctor, endocrinologist and other specialists who are involved in your care, to ensure that your diabetes, and any eye related problems are well controlled.

Diabetic retinopathy is the most common eye problem among diabetics. When blood sugar levels are too high for extended periods of time, blood vessels that supply the eye's retina can become damaged. Over time, these blood vessels can swell, leak, and may eventually close off completely, prompting the growth of abnormal blood vessels. Early intervention is important. There are a variety of treatments available.

OCB has implemented COVID procedures that will ensure a safe exam. Please schedule your dilated eye exam today at 1-800-635-0489 or [request an appointment online](#). Learn more about [care for diabetic eye disease at OCB](#).



Diabetes Resources

Taking steps now to manage your diabetes, including making healthy choices, is important -- your health does not wait.

Visit www.diabetes.org for resources to help you find a healthy balance of nutrition, physical

activity and mental health management.

FAQs of the month

Q: What is the COVID PRE-VISIT phone call?

A: OCB may attempt to contact you by phone before your office visit. We have found that connecting with you before your visit reduces your time in the office and optimizes your care.

This pre-visit call is not considered a separate visit and you will NOT be billed for the call. During the pre-visit phone call, one of OCB's team members will: Ask about COVID symptoms and travel; prepare you for your visit by taking a brief history; and ask you if you have any questions or concerns for your doctor that you would like to address during the visit. [Learn more about OCB's COVID safety procedures](#)



Q: May I bring a companion with me to my eye appointment?

A: Due to COVID precautions, OCB does not allow visitors in the clinic. The only exception are caregivers for patients who need cognitive or mobility assistance. All patients and caregivers will be screened for symptoms, and must wear a mask at all times. Your caregiver must stay with you for the entire visit. When you need a family member or friend to hear the discussion with your OCB doctor, this can be achieved with a cell phone connection to allow the family member or friend to listen in on your discussion with your OCB doctor. For more information, [see our COVID safety procedures](#).

Q: What is OCB's policy on patients traveling to and from Massachusetts?

A: OCB strictly adheres to COVID policies set forth by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regarding travel. At this time, all visitors and returning residents entering Massachusetts from out of state must self quarantine for 14 days or receive a negative test within 72 hours prior to arrival. Additionally, unless the visit is for an urgent issue, patients must show proof of a negative test at least 72 hours after arrival in Massachusetts. For more information, [see our COVID safety procedures](#).

You can view a replay of our webinar on patient safety [here](#).

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Gene Therapy Research for Advanced Dry AMD

Research into gene therapy for the treatment of dry age related macular degeneration (AMD) has taken another step forward. OCB Retina Specialist Jeffrey Heier, MD, recently performed the very first two surgeries using a new proprietary Orbit™ Subretinal Delivery System (Orbit SDS), by Gyroscope Therapeutics, to deliver the company's investigational



gene therapy, GT005, to patients with geographic atrophy (GA) an advanced form of dry AMD that results in progressive and irreversible loss of retinal tissue. This research milestone is a significant breakthrough, providing hope for patients who develop GA, as there are no other treatment options available for this disease.

The first surgery was completed in October 2020 for a patient enrolled in the ongoing Phase I/II FOCUS Trial and the second surgery was completed in early November for a patient enrolled in Phase II of the HORIZON Trial. Both studies are being conducted at OCB and are evaluating gene therapy treatment for GA.



“Dry AMD is one of the leading causes of vision loss globally and gene therapies hold tremendous promise for this disease. Delivering gene therapy directly to the site of disease through a subretinal injection is a proven approach. However, the current method requires a vitrectomy. The Orbit SDS is an innovative delivery system that could address some of the challenges surgeons and patients may

experience with a vitrectomy,” said Dr. Heier, who is Director of Retina Research at OCB.

[Learn more about research at OCB](#)

[Learn more about age related macular degeneration](#)

Sign up for Patient Gateway!

Patient Gateway is a free online tool that is available to all OCB patients. It allows you to safely and securely view your test results, manage appointments and message your care team directly--all in one convenient location. It is even accessible on your smartphone via mobile app. Visit PatientGateway.com to enroll today!

**Patient Gateway is not intended for emergency situations.*

Ophthalmic Consultants of Boston provides specialized clinical and surgical outpatient eye care of the highest quality at a location close to your home.

Our ophthalmologists and optometrists, along with their highly skilled health care teams, are committed to offering you the finest care in a compassionate and comfortable environment. Schedule an appointment at one of OCB's convenient locations.



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