

REFRACTIVE SURGERY NEWS

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Protect Your Eyes from UV Light

Most of us already know that UV exposure can damage your skin, but it is also a threat to your eye health and sight. Both UV light from the sun and from other sources, such as tanning beds, can permanently damage your vision, and this damage accumulates over time.

Some scientific studies have linked UV exposure of the eyes, both UVA and UVB, with both cataracts and macular degeneration, which is the major cause of blindness in people over 50. Another condition linked to UV and sunlight is pterygium, an abnormal, though not usually cancerous, growth on the surface of the eye. A pterygium can sometimes grow over the cornea, blocking vision, and need to be surgically removed.

There are simple ways to protect your eyes:

Always wear sunglasses that block 99% or 100% of UV rays. Even inexpensive lenses will work well if they have UV protection. It is best to have the darker grade of tint (grade III) to block visible

rays. Choose tight-fitting or wrap-around styles for maximum coverage. Wear UV-protective sunglasses even if you wear UV-absorbing contact lenses.

Snow activities, like skiing and snowmobiling, and water sports, such as boating and waterskiing, can cause even more UV exposure, due to reflection. So it's very important to make certain to wear appropriate goggles or sunglasses to avoid eye damage.

If you choose to use tanning booths, be certain to wear protective eye goggles and do not remove them during your tanning session. Keep in mind that UV exposure of the skin causes skin cancer and Dr. Sher does not recommend using tanning booths for this reason.

Start protecting your children's eyes in infancy and throughout childhood. Always have them wear sunglasses while they are outdoors. Good habits start early!

Office Hours

Monday thru Friday

8:00 am—5:00 pm

Information / Appointment Line:

612-338-4861 or

1-888-448-3177

Dr. Sher Receives Honor From General Petraeus



General David Petraeus, Commander U.S. Central Command in Iraq (US CENT COM), having heard of Dr. Sher's contribution of his services to provide laser vision correction surgery without charge to U.S. troops being deployed to war zones, sent him a letter of commendation and thanks, as well as a medallion of Excellence for his service to the troops. Dr. Sher has been performing this service for over three years. A copy of the letter is posted here.



Headquarters
Multi-National Force – Iraq
APO AE 09342-1400

April 14, 2008

Dr. Neal A. Sher
825 Nicollet Mall, 20th Floor
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402

Dear Dr. Sher,

I recently learned of the remarkable service you are providing to deploying troopers by performing corrective eye surgery free of charge. On behalf of the many service members of Multi-National Force – Iraq now serving alongside your patients, I would like to offer heartfelt thanks.

As I recently noted in my testimony before Congress, the support of American citizens for their men and women in uniform is both extraordinary and critical. Our young troopers continue to serve, against all popular expectation and in the face of difficult circumstances, in part because they know they are appreciated by their country. Your provision of free corrective eye surgery is an exceptional and tangible expression of that appreciation, and you can rest assured that it is making a difference in the day-to-day lives of those service members you have treated.

Incidentally, the Soldiers who just completed a tour serving as my protective services detail belong to the Minnesota Reserve. They served with professionalism and distinction; it was my pleasure to serve alongside them. The people of Minnesota can be proud of the work their young people do here.

Again, thank you for your sacrifice; it means more than you can know.

With best wishes from Baghdad,

Thank you!

David H. Petraeus
General, United States Army
Commanding

Help for Farsightedness

Laser vision correction surgery (LVC) has been available for many years for people with myopia (nearsightedness/poor distance vision). This was the first condition to be treated with these procedures. Dr. Sher was one of the first surgeons in the world to use the excimer laser to improve his patients' vision. Some years later, available treatments expanded to include those with astigmatism, then higher degrees of myopia and astigmatism. More recently, laser vision correction, especially PRK (photorefractive keratectomy), has been proven to be effective for people with hyperopia (farsightedness), including those with both hyperopia and astigmatism.

Dr. Sher has been successfully performing laser vision correction surgeries for his patients with hyperopia for many years. As a pioneer in the field of refractive laser eye surgery, Dr. Sher has always had a particular interest in the correction of farsightedness. He edited the first textbook for surgeons on this topic: "Surgery for Hyperopia and Presbyopia" in 1997, and several years later the expanded and updated "Surgery for Hyperopia", considered one of the foremost texts in the field.

As the state of the art and science of laser vision correction has advanced, it has now become possible to successfully improve the vision of people who had not previously been candidates, particularly those with high degrees of hyperopia, astigmatism, or both. Dr. Sher has taken advantage of this new technology to help his patients who have these vision problems, with very satisfactory results.

Formerly farsighted patient, Susan H. (59) says: "Having the surgery was a wonderful decision. I hated wearing glasses-especially the bifocal part-and now I only need glasses for reading..." Another formerly farsighted patient, Nicolette D., says: "My experience with Dr. Sher was fantastic. He answered all my questions, even ones I didn't realize I had and he has assembled a wonderful staff."

If you have hyperopia or hyperopia with astigmatism, and have been told in the past that you were not a candidate for laser vision correction, now may be the time to look again. A thorough eye examination with Dr. Sher, including specialized testing, can determine if you can be helped by this promising procedure.

Laser Vision Correction vs. Contact Lenses: Which is Safer?

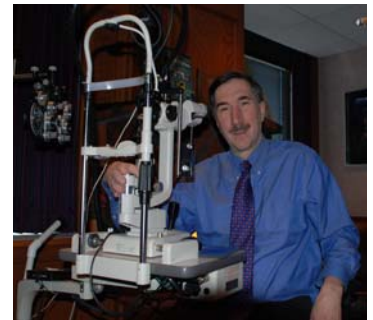
Patient safety is always the focus for doctors referring patients for laser vision correction. Advances in laser procedures have turned the tide on safety, according to a study published in the October 2006 issue of Archives of Ophthalmology, potentially making laser vision correction the safer choice.

The study's author, William Mathers, M.D., and his associates at the University of Oregon Casey Eye Institute came to the conclusion after reviewing several studies of contact lenses and laser vision correction complications. Among its conclusions, the study found:

- Daily contact lens wearers have approximately a 1-in-100 (1%) risk of developing a serious contact-lens-related infection over 30 years of use.
- By contrast, laser vision correction patients have only about a 1-in-1000 chance of significant vision loss.

According to Mathers, the difficulty in comparing the two vision correction approaches is that problems with laser vision correction tend to develop immediately, while complications with contact lenses accumulate over time. While Mathers' study shows that many contact lens problems can be attributed to incorrect wear, especially sleeping overnight in contact lenses, he is quick to point out that problems with contact lenses can develop even if the wearer does everything right.

**"...Problems with
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