

A look at the symbiotic relationship between Retina Research Center and the private practice next door

Retina Research Center (RRC) was established in 1999 to perform clinical trials for retinal diseases; specializing in research for treatment of age-related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, retinal vein occlusions, and uveitis. In addition to evaluating novel drug therapies, RRC conducts clinical trials that may potentially lead to improved surgical procedures and drug delivery devices. At the RRC, we strive to ensure that every patient is an optimal fit for a particular clinical trial and is afforded unique, individualized care.



Because RRC is located next to the clinical practice of Brian B. Berger MD, Chirag Jhaveri MD, and Saradha Chexal MD, patients can receive either the latest treatments approved by the FDA or alternative treatments being evaluated in studies at RRC. The latter option is especially advantageous for patients diagnosed with a disease for which there is no FDA-approved drug, such as dry AMD, for which the current standard of care is multivitamin supplements.

In addition to enrolling patients from our clinic, our doctors work with area ophthalmologists and optometrists who refer patients to RRC for particular trials. This is beneficial to both physicians and patients as patients have the comfort of knowing that they will still see their original referring doctor for all of their non-retinal needs and the referring doctors maintain continuity of

The above is an excerpt from our recently published article in New Retina MD, Fall 2014.

RESEARCH DINNERS

On March 11, RRC sponsored a recruitment dinner for the Alcon Hawk clinical trial for treatment naïve wet AMD at Osteria Pronto at the J.W. Marriott. Siobhan Garbutt, Ph.D. presented the protocol. Since then one patient has been enrolled.

On December 9, RRC sponsored a recruitment dinner for the Genentech Chroma clinical trial for dry ARMD with geographic atrophy at Fleming's at the Domain. Saradha Chexal, MD presented the protocol and since then, we have enrolled nine patients.

On October 23, RRC sponsored a recruitment dinner for Panoptica's clinical trial for treatment naïve wet at Jasper's. David Bingaman, DVM, Ph.D. presented the protocol and since then one patient has been enrolled.

Another successful and well attended alumni dinner was held at Maggiano's on October 28, 2014.

On September 30, RRC sponsored a recruitment dinner for the Pfizer B1261009 clinical trial for diabetic macular edema at Steiner Ranch Steak House. Dr. Chexal presented the protocol. This trial has now completed enrollment and we enrolled 13 patients.

We will host more meetings in the future and look forward to working with you and your patients.

ARVO 2015

Dr. Berger will present Efficacy of RTH258 (ESBA1008), and Anti-VEGF Agent, Applied by Microvolume Injection or Infusion in Subjects with Neovascular AMD in Denver on Sunday, May 3, 2015 at ARVO. Retina Research Center participated in the OWL Phase II trial with Alcon investigating the use of microvolume injections. Seven patients were treated by RRC in this protocol.

Brian B. Berger¹, Susan E. Yann², Andreas Wenzel³, Andreas Weichselberger³, Jean Pierre Hubschman⁴

Saradha Chexal, MD published her article regarding gender specific issues in hereditary eye diseases in Current Eye Research, 2015; 40(2): 128-145. Dr. Chexal found support that ocular genetic conditions show considerable variability with respect to the onset, severity and progression of clinical symptoms and findings that are affected by other genetic variants, hormonal factors, and environmental exposures (including diet and behavior). Gender-specific differences clearly play a major role in the underlying biological pathways related to these conditions. Dr. Chexal has a special interest in hereditary ocular diseases.

SCORE 2

The SCORE2 clinical trial is a 12-month study comparing monthly anti-VEGF medications, Avastin® and Eylea®, in treating macular edema secondary to central retinal vein occlusions. At the month 6 visit, patients with a good response will continue receiving the assigned anti-VEGF treatment every 6 weeks as needed until the end of the study. Patients with a poor response in the Avastin® group will be transitioned to Eylea® monthly. Those participants with a poor response in the Eylea® group will receive intravitreal Ozurdex® at months 6 and 9. We currently have 5 patients enrolled in this trial.

Students

Our doctors are passionate about educating future medical professionals. You will often find students participating with our doctors in patient care. Our doctors provide education and training for medical residents, fourth year optometry students, and University of Texas Austin premedical students participating in the Texas Health Career Mentorship Program.

The following fourth year ophthalmology electives were recently completed in our office by Carlos Plancarte and Julian Jones, both fourth year medical students from UTMB. Carlos Plancarte joined us in December and will specialize in pediatrics and Julian Jones joined us in February and will specialize in emergency medicine. Katherine Serrano is currently completing her elective in our practice.



Carlos



Julian



Katherine

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