Invite you to a globally streamed Congressional Briefing recognizing Dry Eye Awareness Month—July 2021

A Lifestyle Epidemic: Ocular Surface Disease

Tuesday, July 13, 2021
12:00 Noon - 1:00 pm Eastern

Featuring Key Leaders of TFOS’ Next Global Workshop entitled “A Lifestyle Epidemic: Ocular Surface Disease”

Jennifer P. Craig, PhD, FCOptom (The University of Auckland)
David A. Sullivan, MS, PhD, TFOS Founder and Chair, TFOS Board of Directors
Christopher E. Starr, MD (Weill Cornell Medicine, New York-Presbyterian Hospital)

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Link to: https://www.arvo.org/advocacy/NAEVR-virtual-events/

AEVR, a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Educational Foundation, is pleased to host through its new Research Saving Sight, Restoring Vision Initiative this widely attended global event, with streaming support by the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) and event management support from Novartis.
What is Ocular Surface Disease and its Associated Patient Quality of Life Challenges?
The vision community’s knowledge of diseases of the ocular surface—or front-of-the-eye—has evolved dramatically in the past few years. The National Eye Institute (NEI) within the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is supporting numerous studies on the causes of and quality-of-life implications from Ocular Surface Disease (OSD), as is private industry. The NEI has launched the Anterior Segment Initiative (ASI) to address the clinically significant OSD problems of Dry Eye Disease (DED), ocular pain, and ocular inflammation in terms of pain and discomfort sensations and disruptions in the tearing reflex. The ASI plans to study relevant anterior segment neural pathways that contribute to normal or abnormal functioning of the circuits related to the ocular surface to understand and mitigate disease.

As clinicians and researchers more fully understand the breadth of OSD, they have increasingly recognized the role that lifestyle and the environment play in its development. DED, which has been identified as a global problem affecting more than 30 million people in the United States alone, occurs when the eye does not produce tears properly or when the tears are not of the correct consistency and evaporate too quickly. For some people, it feels like a speck of sand in the eye, or a stinging or burning that does not go away. For others, dry eye can become a painful chronic and progressive condition that leads to blurred vision or even vision loss if it goes untreated. Moderate-to-severe dry eye is associated with significant quality-of-life consequences, such as pain, role limitations, low vitality, poor general health, and depression. DED has no cure, but its signs and symptoms can be managed—often dependent on lifestyle choices and changes.

Although researchers have long known about age and sex as factors in DED, they are now discovering ethnic and racial differences and that dry eye increasingly impacts younger patients. It can have many causes including: side-effects from medications or eye surgery (called iatrogenic Dry Eye); lid disorders; immune system diseases, such as Sjögren’s, lupus, or rheumatoid arthritis; contact lens wear; cosmetic use; and environmental exposure. Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, billions of individuals globally have been reliant on digital communications to learn, work, and stay in touch. Prolonged device exposure time can have many consequences, including Digital Eye Strain which can result in blurred vision, as well as both potential short- and long-term effects, such as DED.

What Will the Panel of Experts Discuss?
In interview-style discussion led by AEVR Executive Director James Jorkasky, who is a DED patient, key leaders from TFOS’ next Global Workshop entitled “A Lifestyle Epidemic: Ocular Surface Disease,” will address the latest in lifestyle and environmental factors that result in Dry Eye. This latest initiative follows TFOS’ Dry Eye Workshop II (TFOS DEWS II™) Report, released in July 2017 and published in The Ocular Surface journal. That re-examination of TFOS’ initial 2007 Report updated the definition, classification, and diagnosis of DED; critically evaluated the epidemiology, pathophysiology, mechanism, and impact of the disease; addressed its management and therapy; and developed recommendations for design of clinical trials to assess therapies.

AEVR is pleased to join with TFOS and the entire vision community in recognizing Dry Eye Awareness Month 2021 with this widely attended global event live-streamed, compliments of ARVO, with event management support from Novartis.