



# **DRY EYE AWARENESS MONTH**

**ALLIANCE FOR EYE AND VISION RESEARCH (AEVR)  
In conjunction with  
TEAR FILM & OCULAR SURFACE SOCIETY (TFOS)**

*Invite you to the Fifth Annual Congressional Briefing,  
a global event held during Dry Eye Awareness Month—July 2020*

## ***How Lifestyle Changes During the COVID-19 Pandemic can Affect Vision***

**Wednesday, July 8, 2020**

12:00 Noon - 1:15 pm: Luncheon Briefing

**On-site at 601 New Jersey Avenue NW, Suite 400 and  
Live-Streamed (RSVP to receive link)**

With the recent reliance on digital devices for e-learning for children, remote work for adults, and communications for seniors during the COVID-19 pandemic, a panel will address potential visual implications in all stages of life, such as Digital Eye Strain and Dry Eye Disease.

**Please R.S.V.P. to  
Dina Beaumont @ 202-407-8325 or [dinabeau@aol.com](mailto:dinabeau@aol.com)**

**AEVR and TFOS, each a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Educational Foundation, are pleased to host this widely attended event, with Live Streaming support from the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) and event management support from Novartis.**



**James Jorkasky, AEVR  
Executive Director**



**Bridgitte Shen Lee, OD**



**Scott Schachter, OD**



**Esen Akpek, MD**

**Fifth Annual Dry Eye Awareness Month Congressional Briefing**  
***How Lifestyle Changes During the COVID-19 Pandemic Can Affect Vision***

**July 8, 2020 12:00 Noon – 1:15 pm 601 New Jersey Avenue NW, Suite 400**

**To attend on-site/receive the Live Stream link, RSVP to: 202-407-8325 or [Dinabeau@aol.com](mailto:Dinabeau@aol.com)**

**How Can Lifestyle Changes During the COVID-19 Pandemic Affect Vision?**

Globally, billions of individuals at all stages of life have been reliant on digital communications to learn, conduct work, and to stay in communication with loved ones during the recent stay-at-home orders. Prolonged device exposure time can have many consequences, including Digital Eye Strain, which can result in a short-term effect such as blurred vision, as well as both a short- and potential long-term effects, such as Dry Eye Disease (DED).

Even before the pandemic, Dry Eye had been identified as a global problem, affecting more than 30 million people in the United States alone. It 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 due to inflammation that can cause ulcers or scars on the cornea—the clear surface of the eye. 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.

Although researchers have long known about age, sex, and gender as factors, they are now discovering ethnic and racial differences, and that dry eye increasingly impacts younger patients. It can have many causes, including environmental exposure; side-effects from medications or eye surgery (called Iatrogenic Dry Eye); lid disorders; immune system diseases such as Sjögren's Syndrome, lupus, or rheumatoid arthritis; contact lens wear and cosmetic use. Even wearing Personal Protective Equipment during the pandemic can have an impact.

The National Eye Institute (NEI) within the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is supporting numerous studies on the causes of dry eye and potential therapies, as is private industry.

**What Will the Panel of Experts Discuss?**

The panel will be moderated by Bridgitte Shen Lee, OD (Vision Optique), who will join speakers Scott Schachter, OD (Vision Source and Adjunct Clinical Professor, Marshall B. Ketchum University) and Esen Akpek, MD (Johns Hopkins University), in addressing the potential cascade of visual effects from our day-to-day activities.

These Key Opinion Leaders are experts in the management of dry eye disease as well as active members of TFOS, either as TFOS Global Ambassadors or members of the Tear Film & Ocular Surface Society's Dry Eye Workshop II (TFOS DEWS II™) Report, released in July 2017 and published in *The Ocular Surface* journal. In this re-examination of dry eye disease since the initial report issued in 2007, TFOS DEWS II™ has 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 the design of clinical trials to assess pharmaceutical interventions.

The Report also addressed multiple aspects of the physical, psychological, and socioeconomic impacts of DED, and explained why lifestyle choices, such as environment, surgery, social media use, contact lens wear, anti-depressant medications, and cosmetics are risk factors for the condition.

**AEVR is pleased to join with TFOS and the entire vision community in recognizing Dry Eye Awareness Month 2020 with this widely attended global event held on Capitol Hill and live-streamed, compliments of ARVO, with event management support from Novartis.**