



A Quarterly Publication  
of The Eye Institute of  
The Pennsylvania College  
of Optometry  
at Salus University



# Eyesight

Fall 2008

## Keeping an

### On Diabetes:

- Individuals suffering from diabetes experience blindness more often than those without this disease
- Individuals with diabetes have an increased risk of having cataracts and glaucoma
- Blood sugar, blood pressure, genes and the advancement of diabetes determine if an individual is at risk for diabetic retinopathy
- Make a comprehensive eye exam appointment at The Eye Institute today

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## LJ Smith and The Eye Institute Make the Perfect Team

On November 7, 2008, LJ Smith and The Eye Institute (TEI) will kick-off their second annual "Looking Out for Kids" fundraising event. Both LJ and TEI share the belief that good vision is an essential component for learning and academic success.

Early diagnosis and treatment of vision problems are key in children. One in four children suffer from visual difficulties which can impact their school performance. The goal of the "Looking Out for Kids" charity event is to raise funds to provide comprehensive vision care and eye glasses to uninsured and under insured children in Philadelphia.

Last year, the fundraiser's inaugural year, was by all accounts a great success. The dollars raised helped partially fund vision examinations provided to 650 public school children and over 1,000 pairs of eyeglasses. With your help, we can ensure this year's event will be bigger and better, and more children will be able to



*LJ Smith becomes animated while reading a story to area children within The Eye Institute's pediatric service.*

have quality vision care. The November fundraiser will be held at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry at Salus University's Elkins Park campus. The event will feature a great silent auction. Additionally, there will be a "fashion eyewear show" hosted by LJ Smith and friends, where guests can purchase the latest in chic designer eyewear. Lastly, you can be sure to have a ton of fun interacting with LJ and his other Eagle buddies.

Please help us, help the children of Philadelphia's public schools by supporting the second annual "Looking Out for Kids" fundraiser. If you would like to purchase a ticket, donate silent auction items, or become a corporate sponsor for the event, please call: (215) 276-6070. For more information about The Eye Institute and this event, visit The Eye Institute's website: [www.TEIVision.com](http://www.TEIVision.com).

# November is Diabetes Awareness Month

The National Eye Institute has designated November “Diabetes Awareness Month.” Every year, there are efforts to remind everyone, particularly those with the disease, about important information regarding this condition.



*Vision without Diabetic Retinopathy*

**“Diabetic Retinopathy is the leading cause of blindness in working-age Americans.”**



*Vision with Diabetic Retinopathy*

## What is Diabetes?

Diabetes is a life-long disease marked by high levels of blood sugar. It affects 20 million Americans and about 54 million Americans have pre-diabetes.

## Does Diabetes have Symptoms?

Symptoms may include increased thirst, frequent urination, increased appetite, weight loss, fatigue and blurry vision. However, some patients with elevated blood sugar have no symptoms.

## What are Complications Associated with Diabetes?

Diabetes can lead to kidney problems, peripheral nerve problems and many other medical complications. However, one of the most troubling complications is one that affects vision, diabetic retinopathy.

## What is Diabetic Retinopathy?

Diabetic retinopathy - a complication of diabetes - results from damage to tiny blood vessels in the retina, the light-sensitive inner layer of the eye. Diabetic retinopathy is the leading cause of blindness in working-age Americans. The

longer a patient has diabetes, the more likely they will develop retinopathy. If the diabetic condition is poorly controlled, retinopathy is also likely to be more severe.

The stages of retinopathy can vary from minor blood vessel leakage to more advanced stages, which involve new blood vessel growth associated with retinal hemorrhage. Any stage of retinopathy can lead to vision loss and even blindness if not diagnosed and treated early.

Symptoms of diabetic retinopathy include blurred vision, floaters, shadows or missing areas of vision and blindness.

## How is Diabetic Retinopathy Diagnosed?

An eye care provider can diagnose diabetic retinopathy by using dilating drops to examine the retina. A retinal examination, with dilating drops, must be done every year.

## What is the Treatment for Diabetic Retinopathy?

Advanced stages of

retinopathy involve laser surgery or other procedures to keep blood vessels from leaking or to remove abnormal, fragile vessels. However, the most effective treatment is to prevent or minimize the development of retinopathy as much as possible:

- Control your blood sugar
- Keep your blood pressure low
- Make sure your cholesterol is within normal levels
- Control your weight
- Exercise

Treatment usually does not reverse damage that has already occurred, but may keep the disease from becoming worse.

And remember, all diabetics should have annual retinal examinations with dilating drops.

### Support Groups for Diabetic Patients:

- American Diabetes Association: [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)
- National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse: [www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov)
- Prevent Blindness America: [www.preventblindness.org](http://www.preventblindness.org)



## Spotlight On... Dr. Carlo Pelino

**Since** he started working at The Eye Institute over 14 years ago, Dr. Pelino's professional growth and interests have been in understanding the eye as a reflection of what is happening elsewhere in the body. Specifically, changes in the retina—the light sensitive layer of the eye—can often provide great insight into a patient's health. His interest in the retina began during his residency in 1994, but really blossomed when he had the opportunity to work closely with a distinguished retinal surgeon ten years later. "My retinal fellowship training provided me with an opportunity to build on the knowledge and expertise I gained in my residency," Pelino said.

Dr. Pelino fully understands how clinical findings in the back of the eye (the retina) are a reflection of what is happening throughout the body. "What you find in the retina allows you to make correlations and conclusions about what is happening with the rest of a patient's health," he said. "For example, you can look in the eye and know if the

patient's diabetic condition is under control."

**Furthermore**, Dr. Pelino believes the doctor-patient relationship is the most important aspect of providing vision care. He strives to provide compassionate and competent care to all, and knows listening to his patients is key. Mr James Tammaro, a long time patient of Dr. Pelino's, not only relies on his expertise, but also appreciates his warm and compassionate personality. "He's a great doctor and I wouldn't go to anyone else," Tammaro said. Tammaro suffered a retinal vein occlusion several years ago. While golfing, the 71-year-old's golf ball appeared brown because of the hemorrhage associated with the vein occlusion. Dr. Pelino made the diagnosis as well as an immediate referral for laser surgery. "I have all the confidence in the world in him and feel very confident at The Eye Institute," Tammaro said.

**Part** of Dr. Pelino's responsibilities include training young interns to be the next generation of eye

doctors. The influence teachers have on their students can be immense. Timothy Brown, a third year intern at The Eye Institute, calls Dr. Pelino an inspiration. Brown, a South Carolina native, describes Dr. Pelino as an excellent teacher and clinician. "His lectures prepare us to be better doctors. In addition, he is a caring doctor that is a great role model," said Brown.

At a recent summer conference attended by practicing doctors and interns from other educational programs, Brown and other interns were proud to hear rave reviews about Dr. Pelino's lecture. "He really made a positive impression on the practicing optometrists in attendance," Brown said. The interns training at The Eye Institute and the patients he cares for are both benefiting from Dr. Pelino's experience, expertise, and caring demeanor.



Dr. Carlo Pelino

*"I have all the confidence in the world in him and feel very confident at The Eye Institute."*

*- James Tammaro,  
Dr. Pelino's patient*

**Alcon**

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The Eye Institute would like to acknowledge the generous support of Alcon Laboratories in the production of this newsletter. Alcon's mission is "to discover, develop, produce and market innovative, high quality eye care products that preserve, restore and enhance vision." For more information, visit: [www.alcon.com](http://www.alcon.com).

### Vision Study Seeking Participants

We are seeking paid subjects between the ages of 21 and 80-years-old for a research project to help develop guidelines for the early detection of retinal disease.

#### **Qualifications:**

- Persons with normal vision
- OR
- Persons at risk for or with early Age Related Macular Degeneration

OR

- Persons with Type 2 (Adult Onset) Diabetes with diabetic eye changes
- or
- Persons without diabetic eye changes who have had Type 2 Diabetes for at least ten years.

If interested, you will receive a free vision screening to determine eligibility. If eligible, you will receive a free photostress test and

compensation for participation. The entire process will take approximately a 1/2 hour and can be done at either our Elkins Park or Oak Lane TEI campus. Please contact Catherine Feinstein at **215-780-1452** or by e-mail at [CFeinstein@salus.edu](mailto:CFeinstein@salus.edu) for more information.





**The Clear Choice for Your Vision Care Needs**

**Three convenient locations to serve you:**

**The Eye Institute**  
**1200 West Godfrey Ave**  
**Philadelphia, PA 19141**

**The Eye Institute**  
**at Mount Airy**  
**7145 Germantown Ave**  
**Philadelphia, PA 19119**

**The Eye Institute**  
**at Strawberry Mansion**  
**2800 West Dauphin Street**  
**Philadelphia, PA 19132**

**Main: 215-276-6000**  
**Appointments: 215-276-6111**  
**Website: www.TElvision.com**

## The Eye Institute: Now Part of an Exciting University

The Eye Institute (TEI), since opening its doors in 1978, has been a valuable vision care resource for Philadelphia and all of the Delaware Valley. In addition to providing comprehensive, multi-disciplinary vision care to the community it serves, TEI is also the main clinical training facility for the Pennsylvania College of Optometry (PCO). PCO, founded in 1919, has been a leader in clinical training, teaching, innovation and vision research. The Eye Institute's growth and expansion of services over a 30-year period is representative of the growth

of its "mother organization," PCO. Once a single purpose institution, PCO has recently added new degree programs in the health care field. In 2000, the College added an audiology program. 2007 brought the addition of a physician assistant program. These programs have added to the graduate studies in vision impairment program, established in 1983. With the addition of new degree programs, it was necessary for PCO to consider a structure that more clearly characterized the diversity of professional and graduate programming. This resulted in the application to the

Pennsylvania Department of Education to become a university. On July 1, 2008, university status was granted by the state, and Salus University was born. Salus (Latin for health and well-being) will continue PCO's legacy of quality professional education. Most importantly, The Eye Institute will remain the

valued vision care resource to the community it serves. The care rendered at The Eye Institute will continue to be the highest quality available. The Eye Institute, a clinical practice that is "The Clear Choice" for your vision care needs, is now part of a University – Salus University.

