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E-Newsletter

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Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary (MEEI) is a world leader in helping people with hearing, vision, voice and balance problems. Through its focus on excellence in clinical care, teaching and research, MEEI influences the lives of patients around the world. Each issue of our E-newsletter highlights MEEI's latest developments and activities. In this issue, you'll read about our researchers' role in the

development of Lucentis, a new treatment for age-related macular degeneration, as well as current efforts to provide the safest thyroid and parathyroid surgery for patients in the United States and abroad. In addition, you may visit the hospital's website at meei.harvard.edu for the most recent news, events and other information. We hope you will enjoy the MEEI E-newsletter.

Send Feedback

Research



Transforming Treatment Restores Vision

As the caretaker of her husband and her mother, Gloria Hanson Cohen understands what it means to be dependent and incapacitated. A youthful 72, she is an agile tennis player and golfer who was losing her vision to age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Strolling along the beach in front of

her home, she is eager to share her story about how her vision improved after her recent treatment with Lucentis, a new drug used to treat certain forms of AMD.

AMD causes the macula, which consists of light sensitive photoreceptor cells that provide central vision, to progressively deteriorate. AMD interferes with one's ability to recognize faces or drive or

the less serious of the two and visual loss progresses slowly. Wet AMD is less common but more serious, often causing a sudden and severe loss of vision. Lucentis, the drug that helped Gloria, treats wet AMD.

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Latest in Technology



MEEI: Global Excellence in Thyroid and Parathyroid Surgery

Whether she's singing at Fenway Park, teaching children's theater or coaching Miss America contestants, Lorna Brunelle's voice is as beautiful as ever. She doesn't take it for granted. After a thyroid cancer diagnosis in 2004, a surgeon bluntly told her that the required neck surgery would be routine -- but that it could permanently alter her voice. Terrified by the possibility that her career could be over, Lorna took matters into her own hands.

[Read More](#)

Read about the Thyroid and Parathyroid Surgical Center of Excellence. [Link to the Center](#)

Meet a Doctor



Kathryn Colby, M.D., Ph.D.

Kathryn Colby, M.D., Ph.D., has served the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary (MEEI) in many different capacities since she first arrived for an ophthalmology residency 14 years ago. A committed believer in the three-pronged mission of the MEEI, Dr. Colby is now a busy cornea surgeon who sees patients, teaches medical students, residents and fellows, and is actively involved in research into blinding diseases of the cornea.

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For Your Health

Fast Facts about Age-Related Macular Degeneration*

What is Age-Related Macular Degeneration?

Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) is a degenerative eye disease that causes vision loss. The disease damages a part of the eye called the macula, the middle part of the retina, which is responsible for central vision.

There are two forms of AMD: "Dry" and "Wet."

"Dry" AMD happens when the light-sensitive cells in the macula degenerate. It has three stages: early, intermediate and advanced. "Wet" AMD develops when abnormal blood vessels grow under the macula. These vessels leak blood and fluid, and cause rapid damage to the macula. Both the advanced dry form and the wet form are considered advanced AMD; it is advanced AMD that causes vision loss in most cases. Two thirds of people with advanced AMD have the wet form.

What Are the Symptoms?

Common signs of early AMD include blurred vision and straight lines that appear crooked. A small blind spot may appear in a person's central vision. Loss of central vision makes it difficult to read, drive or recognize faces.

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 [*Support Groups*](#)

Support Group for Thyroid Cancer Survivors

The Thyroid Cancer Survivors Association Inc. is a support environment for people who have had thyroid cancer. Meetings are scheduled for the third Saturday of each month from 10:30 a.m. to noon.

Read more

More information about all the support groups offered at MEEI

 [*In the News*](#)

As a hospital known for excellence in its specialties, local and national reporters regularly look to MEEI's physicians and researchers for their knowledge and expertise. Here are some of MEEI's most recent mentions:

MEEI Audiologist Chris Halpin discussed the details of choosing a hearing aid in The Aug. 28 the *Wall Street Journal* article entitled "The Sleek, Chic, High-Tech Hearing Aid."

Read the Wall Street Journal article

Dr. Halpin also discussed hearing aids during a segment which ran on WCVB-Channel 5, Boston's ABC affiliate.

Read the transcript

The 2008 Guys for Eyes calendar was noted on WCVB-Channel 5, Boston's ABC affiliate. The 2008 calendar features a number of Boston-area men, including Channel 5 meteorologist Mike Wankum, as well as MEEI ophthalmologists Douglas Rhee and George Papaliodis. Proceeds from the Guys for Eyes calendar benefit research into age-related macular degeneration and other

retinal diseases at the hospital's **Retina Research Institute**.

[View the story transcript](#)

Formerly blind, MEEI patient James Elleyby described the experience of regaining his vision in the Nov. 5 issue of the *Boston Globe*. In the column "No Time for Tears," Elleyby discusses how MEEI cornea surgeon Dr. Claes Dohlman performed surgery to implant the Boston Keratoprosthesis (an artificial cornea) that restored his sight.

[Read the Boston Globe article](#)

The November issue of *Boston Magazine* recognized more than 350 elite doctors in the most sought after specialties. "Top Docs 2007: The Specialists" included many MEEI physicians in addition to a profile of ophthalmologist Lucy Young.

[Read the Boston Magazine article](#)

To see more news visit the **[MEEI Public Affairs](#)** webpage.

[Make a Gift Now](#)

The Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary continues the fight to preserve and restore sight, hearing, voice and balance. Help the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary help people throughout the world by making a tax-deductible gift. There are many ways that you can contribute. Every gift, no matter the size, is important and is deeply appreciated.

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[About MEEI](#)

An affiliate of Harvard Medical School, the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary (MEEI) is an independent specialty hospital dedicated to caring for people who have disorders that affect the eye, ear, nose and throat, head and neck, and who suffer from balance problems. MEEI investigators perform research to help find better treatments and cures for these disorders. Established more than 180 years ago, MEEI also trains the medical professionals of tomorrow through its residency and fellowship programs.

For more information, please call **617-523-7900** or **617-523-5498 (T.D.D.)** or visit the **MEEI Website**.

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