

in focus

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FOCUS EYE CENTRE NEWSLETTER ■ Vol. 8, No.3



Great Expectations

'Surgeon to the stars', Dr. Keith Williams, tells Focus audience about Sir Richard Branson, Wavefront, and what to expect from laser vision correction.

Barry Farrell

These days, the excitement that comes when eyecare professionals gather to discuss the latest in laser vision correction (LVC) is almost palpable. They are involved in something revolutionary and they know it.

Much of their enthusiasm stems from the great results that many patients are getting, especially with Wavefront-guided treatments. Having been around for almost four years now, Wavefront 'mapping' and the subsequent and extremely precise treatment that ensues has largely fulfilled the promise of delivering better vision than most patients ever enjoyed with glasses or contacts.

According to most refractive surgeons the results with Wavefront easily exceed those being shown after a standard laser vision correction procedure and no less an authority than the prestigious medical journal *The Lancet*, concluded in its April 2006 issue that, "The advent of Wavefront-guided surgery has been in many ways revolutionary."

Focus Medical Director, Dr. David Edmison, an early adopter of Wavefront and

a Canadian pioneer in laser vision correction, concurs. "The advancements we've seen refractive surgery — highlighted by the advent of Wavefront — has made laser vision correction a real solution for many people, including some who were otherwise not candidates for a refractive procedure."

Wide-spread acceptance is fuelled by the fact that people are comfortable with the various procedures and because they can, quite literally, see the outstanding outcomes that come with having a procedure done by a quality surgeon working at a quality centre. This is in sharp contrast to the early 1990s when a lot of discount centers were offering cut-rate pricing and, as a result, cut-rate procedures.

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Dr. Keith Williams (inset), whose patients include Sir Richard Branson (above), was the keynote speaker at Focus Eye Centre's annual Co-Management Seminar.

© Janet Mayer / Photorazzi

The View from Everest

New 'SurgiCentre' offers clear lens extraction, intraocular lenses

In an effort to address a growing demand for elective eye surgery, Focus Eye Centre has launched an affiliate enterprise known as Everest SurgiCentre.

Everest is an advanced surgical centre highlighted by a state-of-the-art private operating room in which Dr. David Edmison, Dr. John Cheung and other area eye surgeons are performing Clear Lens Extraction and inserting phakic intraocular lenses for qualified patients. Everest also offers Blepharoplasty eyelid surgery to remove fat, usually along with excess skin and muscle, from the upper and lower eyelids.

"Previously, we did these procedures at the Riverside and other local hospitals," says Dr. Edmison,

**Everest
SurgiCentre**

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“There were very bad doctors working in very bad clinics doing very bad things,” insisted Dr. Keith Williams, keynote speaker at Focus Eye Centre’s annual Co-Management Seminar for area optometrists. “These days, the technology has caught up with the idea of laser [eye] surgery,” added the refractive specialist who recently returned to Canada from in his native London, England. (Dr. Williams did his residency at the University of British Columbia in the late 1960s and then ran his own practice in Vancouver for many years.)

Dr. Williams claims that Wavefront for presbyopia (nearsightedness) will be a reality sooner rather than later. “In the past, the promise of LVC has not lived up to what the laser manufacturers were hoping for, but within five years we will have it all,” added the refractive surgeon whose star-studded patient list includes

*The fear factor has been...
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You need a good doctor
at a good centre
doing good work.*

businessman/adventurer Sir Richard Branson, Mel B. of the Spice Girls band, and numerous professional golfers.

LVC should be an educated choice where the patient is well informed and aware that recovery is largely dependent on an individual’s healing process. In the case of Branson he was back and work that afternoon, despite being advised to take a few days off for rest and recovery, said Dr. Williams, who explained that the risks involved in laser vision correction performed by a qualified and quality surgeon is less than what’s at stake when a person crosses a city street.

“The fear factor has been massive and played upon by the press, but the bottom line is that you need a good doctor at a good centre doing good work,” explained Dr. Williams, who raves that the golfers he treats always his best patients. “[Golfers] are always looking to improve — get their vision one line better [on the Snellen eye chart].” It’s this sort of desire for better vision, married with the recognition of the difference between “perfection and function” that makes for the happiest patients, he added.

“Patients must have reasonable expectations,” agrees Dr. Edmison who is duly proud of Focus’s track record after almost 15 years.

“We have consistently offered the best and latest treatments and technology, supported by a level of care — before, during and after

KINGSTON UPDATE

Honest Evaluations

I am always eager to hear about a patient’s experience with Focus and, if appropriate, other laser vision correction centres. (It’s a great way of gauging if we at Focus are doing enough to address patients’ needs and concerns.) So my ears pricked up the other day when a young man who is new to the city came in for a consult and, after his exam, started to tell me about a visit he had made to one of our competitors.

“There is just no comparison,” he said. “You guys are so much more professional... You answered all my questions about my eyes.”

The compliment was welcome, but it was what he said afterward that really stuck with me. He mentioned feeling much more “comfortable” at Focus, a sentiment that was echoed by a young lady who came in the very next day.

‘Comfort’ — it’s one of those intangibles that we struggle to define but are always reluctant to mention in our marketing materials. Why? Because it doesn’t easily translate; doesn’t really mean anything. Unless, that is, you are the patient feeling comfortable — feeling as though you are being given individual care by a surgeon and medical staff who see the person in front of them as a patient and not just a customer.

At Focus, we take pride in attending to such details. We know it makes a difference because people tell us so. And, if they are very pleased, they tell their friends and family and co-workers. In fact, the Kingston community is spreading the word throughout offices and lunchrooms, and among the younger generation of police personnel and fire fighters. Word of mouth is the greatest compliment we can get.

Our reach in the community was recently highlighted when *Kingston This Week* announced the winners of its annual “Readers Choice Awards”. Focus Eye Centre was honoured with the Platinum award. We were thrilled to accept the award, and extend our

sincere thanks to the many members of the community who recognize the standard of care we provide to our patients.

Just as community support is a two-way street, gathering information about laser vision correction demands that you be active; a person should do their research and develop trust and confidence in the centre they have chosen. As such, it is imperative that your surgeon has answered all your questions, addressed your concerns, and explained all the details regarding the procedure that’s right for you.

In order to get up-to-date information to prospective patients (e.g. about Iris Registration, a non-contact method of ensuring the best possible alignment prior to treatment) we work closely with many members of the local optometric community. This involvement includes an annual fall seminar during which “ODs” are told of Focus’s latest Wavefront laser vision correction results and informed of any new treatments or procedures we are considering.

All of which makes for exciting times in laser vision correction. But no event is more valuable than those day-to-day encounters with you, the patient. After you’ve met with your surgeon and had all your questions answered, I often engage in informal chats. It’s during those brief encounters that we at Focus are sometimes subjected to our own precise evaluation. Your candid reviews of Focus — including what we do well, and where we come up short — are essential to helping us get better.



So thank you for the feedback, and keep it coming.

*Michelle Owen
Manager,
Focus Eye Centre,
Kingston*

surgery — that defines us as a premier care provider of laser vision correction.” A claim borne out by hard data: at Focus, 92% of patients who underwent a Wavefront treatment/procedure are, at the one-year mark, enjoying a level of vision (UCVA, or uncorrected visual acuity) that is equal to or better than they had with glasses or contact lenses (BCVA, or best-corrected visual acuity).

“There has been a definite increase in precision since the introduction of Wavefront,” says Focus’s Dr. Thomas Noël, OD, who sees many patients just before and well after their procedure. “At the one-year mark the reaction of most people is ‘Wow!’,” adds Noël, noting that Wavefront PRK is “proving to be the way to go.”

A Striking Life Change

Martial Arts instructor Peter Douvris says laser vision correction has made him a better teacher

By David Napier

Peter Douvris is certainly no whimp, but neither is he an aggressive guy. He avoids conflict, but has ability to protect himself. A 5th degree black belt in Karate and 1st degree black belt in Taekwon Do, Peter's life is all about balance. This translates into the quiet confidence that makes him a good businessman and, by all accounts, a great teacher.

A life-long wearer of glasses, however, Peter wasn't altogether happy. Why? The spectacles he'd worn since he was eight had become increasingly troublesome for his work as an instructor at the six Douvris Martial Arts & Fitness Centers that he and his brother John own and operate in the Ottawa-Gatineau region.

"When I was training I'd have to take my glasses off or they would fall off. Either way," says Peter, "my training wasn't the quality I wanted. Having to wear glasses just became very annoying."

He was familiar with Focus and by late 2002 was willing to drop in and see if laser vision correction was an option.

"I heard about Focus because some of my students were talking about the centre so I went for a consultation. I found everyone very helpful and friendly." As part of the consultation process, he met with Dr. Edmison and was told that his astigmatism was not a hindrance and that his vision after a procedure

would, in all likelihood, be as good or better than he was getting with glasses.

That was all he needed to hear; a surgery date was set.

In December of 2002, Peter had a PRK procedure and the results were nothing short of exciting. "I felt like a little kid. I would

"Now when I am sparring... everything's more comfortable and I have more confidence."

put things on the coffee table and step back and see how far I could go and still read it," he grins. "I was just having fun with it."

Within a matter of a few days he was driving around reading street signs. "I was driving somewhere and looking for an address and all of a sudden I noticed that I saw the sign and address well before I normally would have. I thought, 'Wow, I can really see!'"

The biggest change, however, has come at work where Peter is an active participant in the classes Douvris Martial Arts & Fitness offers, including karate, cardio-kick boxing and various lessons for children.



Peter Douvris

"Our youngest student is four and the oldest is 72," he says proudly, adding that it's great to get in there and train with them. "Now when I am sparring I don't have trouble with distance. Everything's much more comfortable and I have more confidence."

So was the result good enough that he'd instruct others to go ahead with laser vision correction?

"I've recommended Dr. Edmison and Focus Eye Centre to about five of my students. They've all gone for consultations and the three that have had surgery all rave about it. They say it's the best thing they have ever done."

As for those students who balk at the price, saying they can find cheaper prices at other LVC centres, Peter's response hits a familiar tone — one that reflects the quiet confidence of a true teacher. "I tell them: 'Do not bargain basement shop with your eyes... go to Focus Eye, they have the reputation. You are going to get what you pay for.'" **1**

IN THE COMMUNITY



Photo: Yew Lee

Stumbling Towards Ecstasy...

(Gatineau, Que.) — Focus Eye Centre was one of two Major Sponsors of the 2006 Meech Lake Triathlon, held this past July in Gatineau Park, Quebec.

"The race went off very well and received dozens of positive and flattering comments," said Race Director, Mike Collingwood, who has held that position since 1994. Funds from the race went to support the Ottawa Heart Institute and to provide financial aid for the development of young triathletes in the Outaouais region.

The 2007 Meech Lake Triathlon, slated for July 7th, will mark the event's 25th anniversary. For more information see www.meechlaketri.ca. **1**

Top Relay team (left to right): Craig Burge, Erin Down, David McMahon

Headlines

LVC stories and related news from across Canada and around the globe.

Perfect vision is helping and hurting navy

(BETHESDA, Md.) — Almost every Thursday during the academy year, a bus carrying a dozen or so Naval Academy midshipmen leaves Annapolis for the 45-minute drive to Bethesda, where Navy doctors perform laser eye surgery on them, one after another, with assembly-line efficiency.

Nearly a third of every 1,000-member Naval Academy class now undergoes the procedure, part of a booming trend among military personnel with poor vision. Unlike in the civilian world, where eye surgery is still largely done for convenience or vanity, the procedure's popularity in the armed forces is transforming career choices and daily life in subtle but far-reaching ways.

Aging fighter pilots can now remain in the cockpit longer, reducing annual recruiting needs. And recruits whose bad vision once would have disqualified them from the special forces are now eligible, making the competition for these coveted slots even tougher.

Read more: <http://select.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=F40B15FB35550C738EDDAF0894DE404482>

By David S. Cloud
New York Times, June 20, 2006

Eye opening: All you need to know about corrective eye surgery

(Toronto) — With the multitude of corrective eye surgeries on the market, you should take a closer look at what's best for you, not at the price tag. While many factors are involved in

choosing the appropriate procedure, this handy chart — created with the help of Dr. David Rootman, an associate professor of ophthalmology at the University of Toronto — should help.

Before booking a consultation, ask your optometrist to recommend a few laser eye surgery centres and ophthalmologists she trusts.

Read more: http://www.chatelaine.com/health/article.jsp?content=20060608_094811_5388

By Lisa Goldman
Chatelaine, July 2006

Laser eye surgery for refractive errors

(Boston) — Several laser and non-laser refractive surgical procedures have been used to modify the shape of the cornea and correct myopia, hyperopia, astigmatism, and presbyopia. Introduction of the excimer laser to reshape the cornea has resulted in remarkable developments in the correction of these refractive errors. Combined with other advanced ophthalmological instruments, laser refractive eye surgery has resulted in a substantial rise in the safety, efficacy, and predictability of surgical outcomes. Despite these advances, certain limitations and complications persist. In this review, we describe the history, preoperative assessment, surgical techniques, outcomes, and complications of laser refractive surgery.

Read more: www.thelancet.com

By Tohru Sakimoto, Mark I Rosenblatt, Dimitri T Azar
The Lancet, April, 2006

The View from Everest,

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explaining that Everest was established in order to cater to that subset of patients who, largely due to higher refractive errors, fall outside the parameters for typical laser vision correction and will benefit from CLE or a phakic intraocular lens implant.

"As with any refractive procedure, patients need to be aware of their options and cognizant of the limitations," adds Dr. Edmison. Successful laser eye surgery is always about "blending reasonable patient care with superior medical care and equipment."

The operating room environment at Everest is the key to creating a unique, positive experience for the patient, according to Francine DesRosiers, RN, Clinical Manager of Everest SurgiCentre.

"It's a relaxing environment where a patient knows that his or her experience and outcome are our highest priorities," says DesRosiers, who joins Everest after 10 years with the Ottawa Eye Institute and an 18-month stint with ORBIS, the sight saving and international blindness prevention charity that operates a "Flying Eye Hospital" aboard a converted DC-10 wide-body aircraft.

"By putting together a great staff and delivering excellent care, we are trying to assure that patients get great results and then share their positive experiences with others," adds DesRosiers.

The 1,000-square-foot Everest SurgiCentre is located next door to Focus Eye Centre in Suite 112, 1565 Carling Avenue. Patients interested in learning more may call 613-722-5866 or e-mail info@everestsc.com.

Questions to ask before choosing a laser vision correction surgeon or centre

1. Will I meet with the surgeon prior to the day of my procedure?
2. How many procedures have you/this centre performed?
3. Do you offer Wavefront (CustomVue)?
4. Do you use Iris Registration (as a method of aligning one's eye prior to surgery)?
5. Is the procedure performed in a humidity controlled environment?



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