

OCB VISIONS

November 2022



All of us at OCB wish you and your family a safe, happy and healthy Thanksgiving!

November is Diabetes Awareness Month

Why an annual eye exam is crucial to protecting vision in those with diabetes

Diabetes is the leading cause of preventable blindness in the United States among adults age 20 to 74 and is the fifth most common cause of preventable blindness globally. Among the 30 million Americans with diabetes, about one-third have diabetic retinopathy, the potentially blinding complication of diabetes.



People typically do not notice changes in their vision in the early stages of the disease. But as it progresses, diabetic retinopathy usually causes vision loss that in many cases cannot be reversed. That is why it is so important that everyone with diabetes has yearly eye exams for early detection. Yet the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention consistently reports that less than two-thirds of people with diabetes undergo their recommended annual dilated eye examination.

“Uncontrolled diabetic changes in the retina can lead to bleeding inside the eye, retinal detachment, and potentially blindness,” said OCB retina specialist

Dr. Rebecca Soares. "People with early changes in the retina from diabetes may not have changes to their vision, so they may not feel that it is necessary to go every year for their eye exam. As a result, many miss the window for intervention that can prevent blindness."



What you can do now

"To prevent diabetic eye related complications, it is important to be diligent about checking and managing blood sugar and blood pressure," Dr. Soares shared. "It is very important to have a dilated eye exam at least once a year. The earlier diabetic changes in the eye are found, the easier they are to

treat and prevent complications."

When diabetic retinopathy is detected early, a significant amount of preventative steps can be taken to preserve good vision.

"Once we know that someone has changes in the retina, we can help them by encouraging greater blood sugar and blood pressure control and, if needed, we can treat swelling and bleeding in the retina with local medications, lasers, or both. These treatments can restore a significant amount of vision."

If you are a patient with diabetes and you have not scheduled your annual eye exam, we encourage you to do so today.

OCB Updates

Cindy Chao, MD, retires

Dr. Cindy Chao announced that she is retiring in December.

"It has been a privilege and honor to care for my wonderful patients, many of whom I have known for a long time now," Dr. Chao wrote in a letter to her patients. "It is important to me that you know that you have enriched my life in countless ways and I am so grateful that you have entrusted me with your eye care over the past 20 years."

Dr. Chao is retiring from clinical ophthalmology, and is joining an ophthalmology device company, called Adaptilens (www.Adaptilens.com).



Looking forward, Dr. Chao said, "I am excited to apply my love of ophthalmology in such a different way in this next endeavor."

Mami Iwamoto, MD is moving on to new adventures

Dr. Mami Iwamoto, who practiced oculoplastic surgery for nearly 25 years, announced that she is leaving OCB in December to pursue new adventures.



"The honor of caring for you and each of my wonderful patients has brought deeper meaning to my life and career," Dr. Iwamoto stated in a letter to her patients. "As I move ahead in new directions, I will remain grateful for this privilege and will remain inspired by your trust."

Dr. Chao and Dr. Iwamoto are personally overseeing the transition of their patients' care to one of their OCB colleagues and want to assure you that you will continue to receive the outstanding eye care you have come to expect. If you have an upcoming visit with either Dr. Chao or Dr. Iwamoto, the OCB team will be calling you to reschedule your appointment.

Patient safety

Updated COVID boosters and flu vaccines are available at your local pharmacy. Vaccines are recommended to help prevent infection and severe illness and we encourage our patients to stay up to date on their vaccines. All OCB practices require all staff and patients to wear masks and maintain a physical distance. To protect our patients and keep the number of people in the clinic space at a minimum, OCB is restricting the number of visitors allowed in the clinic. In addition, patients and their visitor will be screened for symptoms and must wear a mask at all times.

If you are experiencing any of the following symptoms, OCB requests that you call us and let us assist you in rescheduling your appointment: fever, sore throat, cough, runny nose, headache, muscle aches, loss of smell/taste, or shortness of breath. You will not be charged for rescheduling, even if it is within 24 hours of your appointment.

Schedule your visit through Patient Gateway!

Did you know you can request an appointment through your Mass General Brigham Patient Gateway account?

If you are already a patient with us, you can easily request an appointment through **Patient Gateway!**

Here's what to do:

1. Once you have logged on to the [Patient Gateway](#) site, select the "Visits" tab.
2. Here you will find a "schedule your appointment" tab.
3. That will bring you to a list of your doctors.
4. Here you can request an appointment. Select your OCB eye doctor to request a convenient appointment date and time.

If you do not yet have a [Patient Gateway](#) account, we recommend setting one up. Through the secure portal you can not only request appointments, but you can message your doctor directly, view test results and pay your medical bills online! Just go to [Patient Gateway](#) and follow the steps to create an account.

If you are a new patient, you could also request your first visit through the [website](#).

SCHEDULE YOUR EYE EXAM

WELCOMING NEW PATIENTS

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