

In Focus

FOCUS EYE CENTRE Newsletter

Spring 2003

Globetrotting with Good Reason

Focus Eye Centre's Dr. Edmison shares his expertise with surgeons in China.

Exciting. Rewarding. Hectic. These are the words that Dr. David Edmison uses to describe his recent trip to Fuzhou, China, as part of ORBIS, a privately-funded project that teaches and trains ophthalmologists in developing countries.

"It was a life-changing experience," he says of four days split between surgery theaters and lecture halls, teaching the latest surgical procedures to eager Chinese surgeons.

ORBIS is not the first group of medical professionals to venture into the developing world on a goodwill mission, but it is the first organization to go in aboard its own

DC-10. The airplane has been adapted into a mobile eye hospital, including a surgical center, a laser surgery unit and an auditorium where doctors can watch procedures while they happen.



"It was a life-changing experience. I got a lot more than I gave."

"They get a very good view of your surgical technique," says Dr. Edmison, referring to the dozens of local ophthalmologists who learn by watching in-person or via an audio visual link between the operating

room and classrooms in other parts of the DC-10. Dr. Edmison did only about four procedures a day.

"It's not about getting a hundred procedures done and getting home," he explains. It's about teaching others, so operations will go on long after ORBIS has taken off.

Just days after his return to Canada, Dr. Edmison is back in his crisp, green "scrubs", prepared for another day of laser vision correction procedures at Focus Eye Centre. But the veteran of two ORBIS missions (the first was to Hyderabad, India, in 1994) is still flying.

After working long hours for no pay in China, one of Canada's most respected and experienced laser vision correction surgeons, comes to a clear conclusion: "I got a lot more than I gave."

Patient Profile

Dr. Edmison and the Focus team help Susan Desjardins toss her glasses – and a schoolyard full of bad memories – into the top drawer.



Susan Desjardins and her old glasses.

Even at 46, Susan Desjardins easily recalls a childhood spent dodging the bars and taunts that went with wearing Coke-bottle glasses.

"My claim to fame in Brownies was that [when angled toward the sun] I could burn paper with them," says the Ottawa resident. Susan had almost given up hope that anyone – or any procedure – could ever free her from the thick lenses through which she saw the world.

Other laser vision correction centers wouldn't touch her prescription with a ten-foot ophthalmoscope, or wanted her to undergo 'at least a year of tests'. Then, with few expectations and nothing to lose, Susan dropped into Focus Eye Centre. Dr. Edmison examined

her and agreed that Susan's situation was highly unusual, but quickly spotted a solution which would require multiple treatments.

Susan underwent her first procedure in September of 2001, had her second procedure six weeks later, and then went in for the Lasik treatment that improved her vision even more.

The results came clear a few nights later. Susan awoke and saw the time on her alarm clock. "It was 2:17. I'll never forget those numbers," she says. "I started jumping for joy and scared my husband half-to-death.

"I can see even better than him now," she adds with a laugh, "and he has been a policeman for 26 years."

Susan says the warm and professional reception she received at Focus made the decision to go ahead with laser vision correction much easier.

"Being able to talk freely with Dr. Edmison, and all the staff at Focus, made a big difference."

These days Susan boasts 20/30 vision, and is determined to return to New York, Paris and the other places she visited but never fully enjoyed.

"I missed a lot," she says.

In the meantime, she keeps one of her old, thick lenses in the top drawer of her desk.

"It keeps me focused, and it keeps me humble. It reminds me of how far I've come."

Sights Set on Paris

DID YOU KNOW?

• More doctors across North America and around the world use VISX excimer lasers than any other laser vision correction system. • VISX lasers have been used to successfully treat over 3 million eyes in the U.S., and over 5 million eyes around the world. • Focus Eye Centre is one of the first laser vision correction centres in North America to obtain a VISX S4 excimer laser system and to offer its patients the benefits of the most current and advanced laser technology available anywhere in the world today. (See story, p.2)

Focus Acquires Latest Laser

New VISX S4 technology means even better results, improved safety.

As the leader for excellence in laser vision correction in Eastern Ontario, Focus Eye Centre is committed to providing the best possible surgical outcomes and outstanding medical care.

As part of that commitment, Focus Eye Centre is very excited to announce that, in November, 2002, we upgraded our laser in Ottawa from the VISX S2 to the VISX S4 excimer laser system.

The VISX S4 laser system incorporates the most current and advanced laser technology available anywhere in the world today. Here are just some of the many advantages of this new technology for Focus patients.

ActiveTrack™ 3-D Eye Tracker

Infrared cameras actively follow the tiniest motions of your eye in all three dimensions. The eye-tracker automatically and continuously repositions the laser during the procedure so you achieve the optimal treatment.

Now you can relax during your surgery, knowing that the laser is adjusting to the slightest movement of your eye.

ActiveTrack 3-D Automatic Centering

In order to achieve the best possible outcome, the laser must be centered on the patient's pupil. ActiveTrack enables the surgeon to precisely identify the center of your pupil and keep the laser centered to within 50 microns (less the width of a human hair) even if your eye moves.

Variable Spot Scanning

With older laser technology, some patients were at increased risk of experiencing night vision problems following laser vision correction. Variable Spot Scanning allows for a larger treatment, and gives the surgeon greater flexibility when it comes to personalizing your laser vision correction procedure so that the risk of night vision problems are significantly reduced, or eliminated.

Q: "Who is a candidate for laser vision correction?"

A: Many, but not all people, are candidates for laser vision correction.

There are a number of categories we explore to determine if the person qualifies. First, it is important to understand a person's motivation for wanting the surgery. Then we need to determine whether a person has reasonable expectations regarding possible outcomes. After surgery, most patients experience a degree of vision that is as good, if not better than what they had with glasses or contact lenses but that result cannot be guaranteed.

The overwhelming majority of Focus patients rate their results as "very good" or "excellent". Of course, we also look for any ocular contraindication, or problems with the eye that would

ASK THE DOCTOR



preclude a person from having laser eye surgery. These include (but are not restricted to) a cornea that is either too thin or too flat, a diseased cornea, or pupils that are too large.

We have a number of systems in place, based on sound medical principles and 11 years of experience performing laser vision correction, to ensure a quality result. This includes a staff that is made up of a high percentage of medical professionals, and not

just technicians, and the fact that every patient is screened by doctors, including the surgeon.

Approximately 15 percent of people don't qualify for laser vision correction, but of those people, 10 percent are candidates for other procedures available at Focus Eye Centre that will improve their vision.

At Focus, we have always had the philosophy that when it comes to your eyes, there is no room for compromise. We are committed to providing personalized, individual care and delivering great results – one patient at a time.

It is important to remember that the initial consultation is just as important as the procedure itself. We will not treat a patient if we don't think they will have a good outcome. As well, we offer the full range of surgical options so that patients can choose the procedure which is best and safest for them.

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