

## The Doctors Are In

Many eye doctors have undergone Laser Vision Correction, and many more have referred friends and family members. Why? The results people are getting from Intralase SBK with Wavefront is one good reason.

By Mark Thompson

When it comes to healthcare, it just makes sense that a doctor's opinion holds more weight than almost anyone else's. So when your doctor not only advises that you have a medical procedure, but then tells you she's had it done — or advised family or friends to have it done — your ears prick up.

Focus Eye Centre has upwards of 200 optometrists (ODs) who participate in what is known as the Focus Co-Management Program. This means that hundreds of ODs and MDs in the Capital Region have investigated Laser Vision Correction, generally, and Focus, specifically, and feel comfortable referring patients to Focus and Drs Edmison, Menard and Cheung.

This bell-ringing endorsement stems from the fact that LVC is proven effective, and that

Intralase SBK has been delivering some pretty impressive results since it came online about two years ago. But *InFocus* wanted to know precisely why eye docs — including many ophthalmologists — are so happy with LVC that they've had their own procedures and/or recommend it to their family or friends.

**"The biggest benefit [of Intralase SBK] is the decreased complications compared to that of LASIK."**

It wasn't difficult to find eyecare professionals who fell into both categories. One such person is Ottawa-area optometrist Dr. Sara Anstey. "I have been an advocate ever since I took the refractive surgery course at Waterloo in my 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Optometry. [But] I am more of an advocate now that I had Intralase SBK in June," she says. "It makes it that much easier recommending it to patients now that I have gone through the process."

"The whole process was just so easy and quick... I was made to feel so comfortable and the procedure was even faster than I thought. I especially liked how I was walked through all the aspects of my procedure."

This answer-all-questions approach is what won over Dr. Marie-Louise Lapointe's two daughters. Stephanie, 20, is completing her Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Sciences at the University of Toronto and Christine, 21, is completing a degree at the London School of Economics (LSE). "They are quite sophisticated [young women], so when we went to see Dr. Edmison [as a family] they wanted him to talk to them as though I wasn't in the room," says Dr. Lapointe, an ophthalmologist with a busy practice in the east end of Ottawa. They wanted a full consult without coaching from their mother.

Both Stephanie and Christine opted for Intralase SBK with Wavefront. "They were against LASIK," adds Dr. Lapointe, who admits she was pleased when her daughters placed their trust in Dr. Edmison.



### A light-hearted look at LVC:

Dr. Marie-Louise Lapointe and her daughters Stephanie and Christine prepared this triptych of their lives before and after Intralase SBK

"I like his thinking and his philosophy about Laser Vision Correction, and his capacity to deal with any situation that might arise — which it didn't, of course. Plus, he's a nice doctor," says Dr. Lapointe, who practiced alongside Dr. Edmison in the mid-1990s, and did copious amounts of research before becoming a committed fan of LVC.

Dr. Lapointe's thinking about LVC crystallized in the 90s when she attended an American Academy of Ophthalmology conference and happened upon a lecture about refractive surgery and the military. She was shocked to hear that the United States' armed forces was "quite keen on PRK for military personnel", but the family members of those being asked to fly, sail, and march for Uncle Sam were being offered LASIK instead. "I thought: 'This is interesting.'"

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## What is Intralase SBK?

**Intralase SBK** (Sub-Bowman's Keratomileusis) is an advanced form of surface ablation that allows patients a visual recovery time measured in hours rather than days. It is a two-stage procedure where the first laser creates a thin flap of the cornea, and a second laser corrects the refractive error. (The term SBK refers to the part of the cornea just below the Bowman's layer). This flap technique prevents almost all the potential complications of the traditional LASIK procedure (e.g. decreased structural integrity of the cornea, an increased incidence of dry eyes and susceptibility to trauma) while providing post-operative comfort and rapid visual recovery.

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## PATIENT PROFILE

# If They Could See Me Now

As a schoolgirl, Barbara Murphy was fitted for glasses that made going to school 'hell'. Sixty years later, she's finding life-after-LVC is downright heavenly.

By JoAnn Chiasson

When Barbara Murphy was a girl growing up in England, life dealt — as it inevitably does — a first, rough truth: her vision wasn't great, and by 10 years old she learned she needed glasses. The result was a pair of ghastly tortoise-shell frames.

Did they look sweet on a young schoolgirl? "Oh, right!" laughs Murphy, adding that if it wasn't for the fact that they granted her the sudden gift of good vision, her ugly eyeglasses "would just have been unbearable."

Sixty years later, she still shudders at the related memories. "My school pals — well, I'll call them that — some of them made my life hell," she quietly adds. "They were the most inexpensive (glasses) you could get. And it was miserable wearing them."

But the gift of vision is a powerful thing: "I could suddenly see everything!" she recalls, sounding still a bit thrilled at the thought. "I would have been thoroughly miserable if it was not for that."

Today, Barbara is 75 and lives in Ottawa, not far from one of her two sons, Patrick, a policeman who works downtown in the nation's capital. And, once again, she's been given the gift of good vision — this time, thanks to Laser Vision Correction (LVC) and Focus Eye Centre.

Her path to LVC and Focus was paved, in part, by her son. "He has several colleagues at work who'd had this treatment and it sounded as if [LVC] had made such a difference to them; they all thought it was great."

Was she apprehensive about the idea of having LVC?

"Well, I've got a daughter-in-law who had this done and a neighbour who had laser treatment who was simply scared to death to do it. But he came back and told me: 'There's nothing to worry about — it's great!' So, honestly, I really wasn't too concerned."

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She decided then and there against doing LASIK procedures at her own clinic, or recommending LASIK to others.

"I thought, 'That's not for me'," Dr. Lapointe recalls, adding "I know a lot of [doctors] who have gone back to PRK, or now SBK, after 10 years [of performing LASIK]."

And then there are those optometrists and ophthalmologists who never left PRK and Intralase SBK to begin with.

And how was her procedure?

"Very good. Everyone was very kind — they make you very comfortable, I was all wrapped up in a blanket because the room where they do the procedure has to be, I suppose, a bit chilly. The only thing that was uncomfortable was the fitting of the rubber ring on the eye, and the pressure on that was quite extreme, but you couldn't feel anything of the actual procedure. Really there was nothing to be concerned about."

**The procedure was pain-free and the results 'almost immediate'.**

And the result?

"You mean being able to see better? It was almost immediate," she says.

"They put stuff in your eyes to make sure your pupils adjust, and you've got to be a little careful and wear an eyeshade and everything, 'til you re-adjust. But as for seeing... well, I couldn't quite believe it. It's amazing!"

And now? How has life improved after LVC?

"Well, you hear about this and, so, you almost expect it, but when you actually experience it, it truly is amazing," says Barbara, who's an avid reader. "I read a bit of everything — I think my son thinks I'm quite mad," she says. And, now, it's no longer a question of needing her glasses to find my glasses, before she can pick up a novel and settle in.

Plus, she says, there are the little improvements to daily life. "You look out the window, and you can see the cars across the road. I can actually read the license plate on the car. Or the road sign — from way off! It's absolutely fantastic."

"I am so pleased with my vision these days; I couldn't ask for better," says Dr. Anstey, who gladly offers up the fact that she has recommended Intralase SBK to both family and friends. "Post-operatively I had minimal, if any discomfort, and [my] vision was quite clear within 24 hours."

"I think the biggest benefit [of Intralase SBK] is the decreased complications compared to that of LASIK. It has the safety of PRK but minimal recovery time, which is what patients want." 'Patients', like the good doctor herself. ■

## THANK YOU FOCUS



Dear Focus:

I am sending you a couple wedding pictures. I really can't tell you enough how much it meant to me to not have glasses on during this special day. My quality

of life has gone up and I have gained a new confidence! Now I can focus on my future!

Thank you so much...

for your wonderful care!

Amy Patterson, Kingston, ON

Dear Focus:

I had LVC surgery two years ago and I'm happy with the results, having gone from almost -11 in both eyes to basically 0. Awesome! Best investment I ever made.

I tell everyone who asks me about it the same thing: I am very pleased with the results and... look back now and think, 'What was I waiting for all this time?'

Dr. Edmison and the staff were very professional and friendly and I felt like my vision was being monitored closely enough without feeling "smothered" by too many required visits, especially since I lived an hour away from the clinic at the time.

Thanks,

Angela Hamel, Gatineau, QC

Dear Focus:

It is a great pleasure to announce that I am eyeglass free. I cannot express how I feel... so excited with this wonderful gift!! Thank you to the excellent and caring team; I felt very well taken care of by all the Focus Eye Centre staff. You were all so comforting.

I have been enjoying the fact that I don't need to clean my eyeglasses or deal with the sweating on my nose. I am adjusting very quickly to Monovision. I have a passion for photographing flowers, which I had set aside, but am now looking forward to enjoying again. There are so many nice things about my life after LVC that I could go on & on & on!

Thank you again,

Denise M. Larocque,

Front Desk Administrator, Focus Eye Centre



**Do you have a story to share about LVC?**

Send your letter, name and daytime contact info to:

The Editor, *InFocus*,  
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or [info@focuseye.com](mailto:info@focuseye.com)

**Did You Know?** There have been more than 2 million Intralase femtosecond procedures performed in more than 50 countries.

# What's the Good Word?

Eye doctors are often the primary source of referrals to Focus.

By Michelle Owen

Focus has established a strong bond with local optometrists (ODs) in Eastern Ontario and, as a result, these ODs are committed to Focus Eye and the care that we provide.

As Manager of Focus Eye Centre in Kingston, it has been my experience that members of the optometric community are confident when sending patients to Focus because they know their patients will be well taken care of and be well-educated on Laser Vision Correction (including Intralase SBK and PRK with Wavefront). ODs also trust that their patients will be recommended the best procedure for them — and only if they have proven themselves to be candidates for a procedure.



Dr. Ryan Fitzpatrick and his wife Christal, who had LVC at Focus in Kingston in 2006.

On that last point, Focus always seems to be challenged by our ODs' toughest patient prescriptions. Yet these eye docs remain confident that even patients with difficult issues — some who have strived for freedom for long periods of time — might qualify for PRK, Intralase SBK, or Clear Lens Exchange (CLE) procedures to reduce high prescriptions.

The key to this doctor-doctor relationship is that Focus takes the time to make it possible and make it *positive*. At many other centres high-prescription patients would be deemed 'bad candidates'. The ODs trust that we are up to the challenge, but understand, too, that our surgeons are very frank about patient candidacy and committed to ensuring that patients have reasonable expectations should they indeed qualify for a procedure.

In my conversations with ODs, having the confidence of these local doctors creates a trickle-down effect in terms of trust at the community level and those people considering LVC. Of course, word-of-mouth also speaks volumes in a small community like Kingston, and even a bigger centre like Ottawa.

But given how many ODs have undergone LVC, and how many more have referred family or friends, you could say that actions speak even louder than word-of-mouth. ■

## Finishing Strong after LVC



Competitive Kayaker, **Kathleen Tayler** of Ottawa, had Laser Vision Correction with Focus in 2008. Since then, the 20-year-old University of Ottawa student has steadily improved her results at national and international competitions. Focus entered into a sponsorship agreement with Kathleen as a way of supporting an impressive local athlete with admirable determination and Olympic-size dreams.

I participated in the Ontario Summer White-water series, a primary destination for racers from Western Canada and the USA, which took place in 4 locations in Ontario and Quebec. I had a great series and won 3 out of the 4 races with competitive fields at each

I then headed out West to compete in the Canadian Nationals, where I placed a solid 5<sup>th</sup>, and the Pan-American Championships, where I placed 9<sup>th</sup> against competitors from Canada, USA, Brazil, Austria, and Slovenia.

The Ontario team then headed to B.C. for some paddling on the Clearwater river, and a

race on a new and extremely challenging artificial whitewater course just outside of Whistler. This course is most likely to be the site of the 2010 Canadian National Team Selection. It was great to travel to this new race site early, as preparation for next years trials. Focus Eye Centre's funding was able to pay for my plane ticket out west and back.

Now, I'm back home working and training in Ottawa before heading into the fall school semester. The next race on my schedule will be first weekend of October held in Charlotte, NC.

— Kathleen

## KINGSTON UPDATE

### An Eye for Fashion!



The first thing you may want to do after Laser Vision Correction is get that first pair of fashionable sunglasses. Now that you do not have to worry about your prescription, you can pick any pair off the rack at any store. But beware! The protection you get from some sunglasses can be less than enough to keep you safe and healthy. Read the labels and make sure the sunglasses you want offer the UV protection you need. Also remember that, as with LVC, you get what you pay for.

#### But what is UV, UVA, and UVB?

**UV** — Ultraviolet light is made up of invisible rays emitted by the sun. UV exposure can contribute to a number of additional ocular complications including macular degeneration and cancer.

**UVA** — Ultraviolet radiation that passes through the Earth's ozone layer reaches our skin and can lead to premature aging.

**UVB** — Ultraviolet rays that are absorbed by the ozone layer, but are still harmful and can contribute to the cause of skin cancer, cataracts and burn your skin.

When purchasing sunglasses, it is important to look for a label specifying UV protection. Choose a pair that blocks 100% of UV rays

because they will protect you from both UVA and more harmful UVB rays.

Tania Correia, Patient Coordinator at Focus in Kingston, has this advice:

"When selecting the right sunglass for a customer, I always ask if they know about polarized lenses which cut reflected glare — sunlight that bounces off smooth surfaces like pavement or water. They can be particularly useful for driving and fishing," says Tania. "As for ultraviolet (UV) protection, they block 99% of UV rays, exposure to which over the long-term has been linked to eye disease. Also consider wraparound sunglasses. They are shaped to keep light from shining around the frames and into your eyes, which helps protect your eyes from light at all angles," she adds.

Wearing proper sunglasses is very important to your health, so it's not surprising that so many patients ask about what type of sunglasses should be worn after having LVC. What I tell people is that the future health of their eyes starts by giving them the protection they deserve.

Michelle Owen, Manager  
Focus Eye Centre, Kingston



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Moving into eMatrix

Shine is now offering eMatrix, a skin rejuvenation system that may be safer and more effective than other systems in the treatment of wrinkles, skin laxity, scars, acne scars, textural irregularities, tone and superficial skin lesions.

"With the eMatrix system there is minimal disruption of the skin but a high level of remodeling, including healthy changes for those patients suffering from acne scarring," says Francine DesRosiers, Operations Manager at Shine.

According to the manufacturer, Syneron Medical Ltd., the technology is safe on all skin types and offers minimal downtime. Studies have shown that 83% of eMatrix patients enjoy an improvement in skin brightness, while 90% realize smoothness of their skin and/or wrinkle reduction (*Journal of Drugs & Dermatology*, March 2009).

Technically speaking, the eMatrix is a "Sublative Rejuvenation System" in which an applicator delivers bipolar radio frequency energy via a matrix of 64 electrodes in the disposable applicator tip. Less tissue surrounding the matrix points may be stimulated by heat which helps accelerate the healing process, leading to a tighter, rejuvenated appearance of the skin.

The news about eMatrix is very positive, however, the full integration of eMatrix into Shine's suite of procedures will come only after a thorough assessment by Shine Medical Director, Dr. Gloria Rockwell.

"We appreciate the research done by others, including other clinics and what has been reported in medical journals," says DesRosiers, "but Dr. Rockwell is always looking for clinical data confirming that Shine's own patients see the long-term effectiveness of any treatment or technology we adopt."



Francine DesRosiers: Looking for long-term benefits from eMatrix

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