



PRESS RELEASE

TO: Editor in Charge

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Early Detection Key to Slowing Development of Glaucoma

The American Academy of Ophthalmology Marks January Glaucoma Awareness Month to Encourage Frequent Eye Exams

(Honolulu, Hawaii), January 29, 2009 – Glaucoma is the leading cause of preventable blindness affecting everyone from infants to seniors. Over 3 million Americans are living with this disease and nearly half of them remain unaware that they have it. The American Academy of Ophthalmology designates January as Glaucoma Awareness month in order to raise awareness and encourage regular eye examinations to maintain healthy vision.

Glaucoma is a condition which elevates pressure inside the eye causing damage to the optic nerve. If left untreated, the pressure continues to build causing the eye to experience diverse levels of vision loss that may even result in total blindness.

“Though Glaucoma may not show any early symptoms, patients can still be able to notice changes in their vision,” said Hawaiian Eye Center Medical Director Christopher Tortora, M.D. “Patients experiencing cloudy or haloed vision, nausea or headaches, light sensitivity, excessive blinking or tearing, crossed eyes, disproportionate growth of one eye to larger than the other, and decreased vision should consult with their eye doctor as soon as possible to prevent further damage to the eyes.”

Everyone from infants to seniors for can be affected by Glaucoma. Those who are at the most risk are men and women over the age of 60, African-American and Hispanic

populations over the age of 40, have a history of Glaucoma in the family, experienced a serious eye injury in the past, or have other health conditions such as diabetes.

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Various types of treatment are available when Glaucoma is diagnosed early on. Forms of treatment include eye drops, laser treatments, or surgery. Here in Hawaii, Dr. Tortora and the staff of the Hawaiian Eye Center treat patients living with Glaucoma by operating two surgical suites fitted with the most technologically advanced eye lasers and surgical equipment.

“Once Glaucoma has affected the eyes, the damage remains irreparable,” said Dr. Tortora. “However, with early detection and proper treatment by an eye care professional, it is possible to slow and even stop its progress.”

Dr. Tortora, a board certified ophthalmologist, is host of “The Hawaiian Eye Show,” a weekly informational radio program about healthy vision. He and his colleagues at Hawaiian Eye Center are committed to educating the public about the importance of preventative eye care. To learn more about a variety of eye health issues, please call the Hawaiian Eye Center at 621-8488 where “*life has never looked better.*”

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