



Extended Sun Exposure Increases Risk of Eye Pterygium - Florida Surgeon Treats Condition With State-of-the-Art Surgical Techniques

Dr. Arun Gulani of the Gulani Vision Institute said increased sun exposure in tropical and sub-tropical climates can lead to an eye condition called pterygium. Pterygium can be surgically. Gulani has taken this surgery to a new level using human placental membrane and surgical glue.

As spring and summer approach, we are constantly warned about the dangers of increased sun exposure. Dermatologists caution us about melanoma. Doctors urge us to remain hydrated during outdoor activities. Now, a leading eye doctor is sounding the alarm about the harm the sun can do our eyes. Dr. Arun Gulani of the Gulani Vision Institute said increased sun exposure in tropical and sub-tropical climates can lead to an eye condition called pterygium, though its causes are not completely understood.

Pterygium (pronounced ter-ig-ee-um) is a raised, wedge-shaped growth of the conjunctiva. Symptoms may include irritation, redness and tearing.

Pterygium is fairly common among sports and recreation enthusiasts, as well as outdoor workers, Gulani said. Although it often remains dormant with little or no reason for treatment, it can be a relentless disorder, growing across the cornea and adversely affecting vision.

As the pterygium develops, it may alter the shape of the cornea, causing astigmatism. It can be surgically removed, but surgery and stitches may, ironically, produce astigmatism. If the condition does develop, however, new surgical breakthroughs are making the residual effects of removing pterygiums less likely. Gulani, who educates doctors around the world on the latest eye surgery techniques, has been teaching what is referred to as the iceberg concept in treating pterygiums.

The part of the pterygium that you see is just the tip of the iceberg, Gulani said. The actual growth may be much deeper.

Gulani said has applied this advanced surgical technique using human placental membranes grafted to the eye to promote healing after surgery. Recently, Gulani took the surgery to a new level: he was among the first to use surgical glue in eye surgery. In fact, Donnie Hammond, pro golfer and two-time PGA Tour winner, was the first in the North Florida area to undergo this glue technique instead of stitches.

The glue was used to graft a human placental membrane to the eye, Gulani said. The beauty is not putting stitches in the eye. There is no astigmatism, and it prevents fibrosis and bleeding. This relentless disorder is frequently seen in golfers and other outdoor enthusiasts.

Now there is an elegant and successful procedure available to correct it. Glue is definitely the future in promoting better recovery after eye surgery.

Of course, Gulani said prevention is still the best medicine. Since pterygiums are most commonly caused by sun exposure, protecting the eyes from sun, dust and wind is recommended, including wearing good sunglasses with UV protection.