

# THE LIGHT PIPE

Winter 2023 Edition

Editor-in-chief: Paul Walia, MD

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The Newsletter of

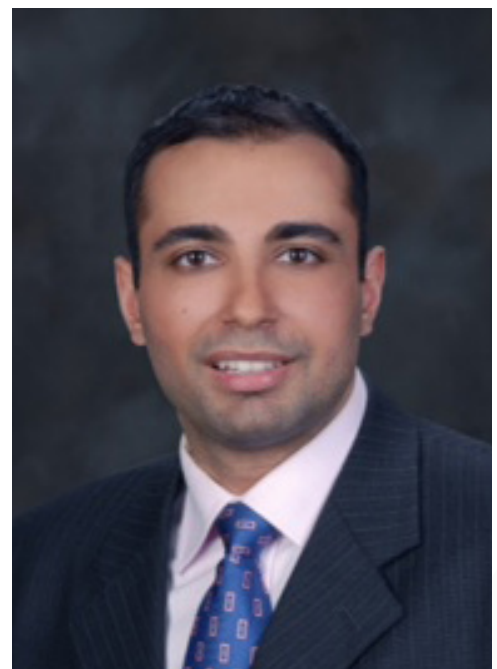
GEORGIA  RETINA

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



As the year wraps up, the old saying 'time flies when you're having fun' rings true. Wow, 2023 has been a busy and fun year at Georgia Retina. We welcomed a new doctor to our practice and expanded an office location in Stockbridge. We approach the holidays with a sense of gratitude. We are thankful to have state-of-the-art facilities and treatments to provide exceptional patient care. And we remain thankful for your trust in us to provide retinal care to your patients.

The doctors at Georgia Retina wish you a very happy holiday season.



Dr. Paul S. Walia

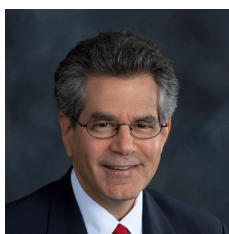


# MEET OUR DOCTORS

With more than 80 years of combined experience in retinal health care, Georgia Retina's physicians have served the Metro Atlanta community since 1995.



Michael S. Jacobson, M.D.  
Tucker



Scott I. Lampert, M.D.  
Marietta, Tucker,  
Northside/Atlanta



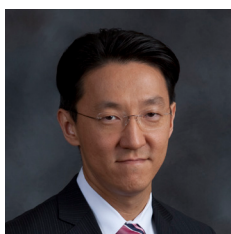
Jay B. Stallman, M.D.,  
F.A.C.S.  
Gwinnett



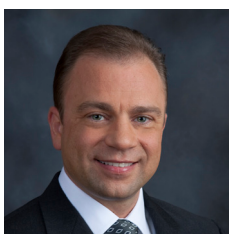
Mark J. Rivellese, M.D.  
Northside/Atlanta,  
Tucker



Atul Sharma, M.D.  
Douglasville, Marietta



Sean S. Koh, M.D.  
Cumming, Gwinnett



Robert A. Stoltz, M.D.,  
Ph.D.  
Cumming, Marietta



John J. Miller, M.D.  
Douglasville,  
Peachtree City



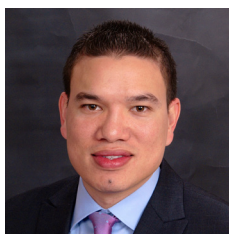
Stephanie L.  
Vanderveldt, M.D.  
Cumming,  
Northside/Atlanta



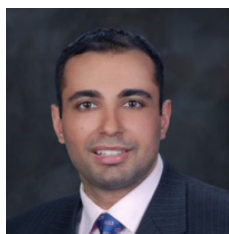
Hyung Cho, M.D.  
Conyers, Stockbridge,  
Gwinnett



S. Krishna Mukkamala,  
M.D.  
Cartersville, Cumming,  
Marietta



David S. Chin Yee, M.D.  
Peachtree City,  
Stockbridge



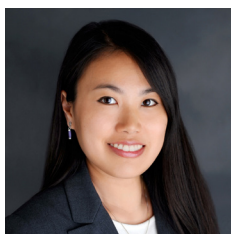
Harpreet "Paul" S.  
Walia, M.D.  
Braselton, Gwinnett,  
Stockbridge



Yogin Patel, M.D.  
Conyers, Douglasville,  
Macon



Gregory D. Lee, M.D.  
Gainesville,  
Northside/Atlanta



Ella H. Leung, M.D.  
Cartersville, Marietta



Rahul Komati, M.D.  
Macon, Stockbridge



Alexander R. Bottini,  
M.D.  
Braselton, Gainesville

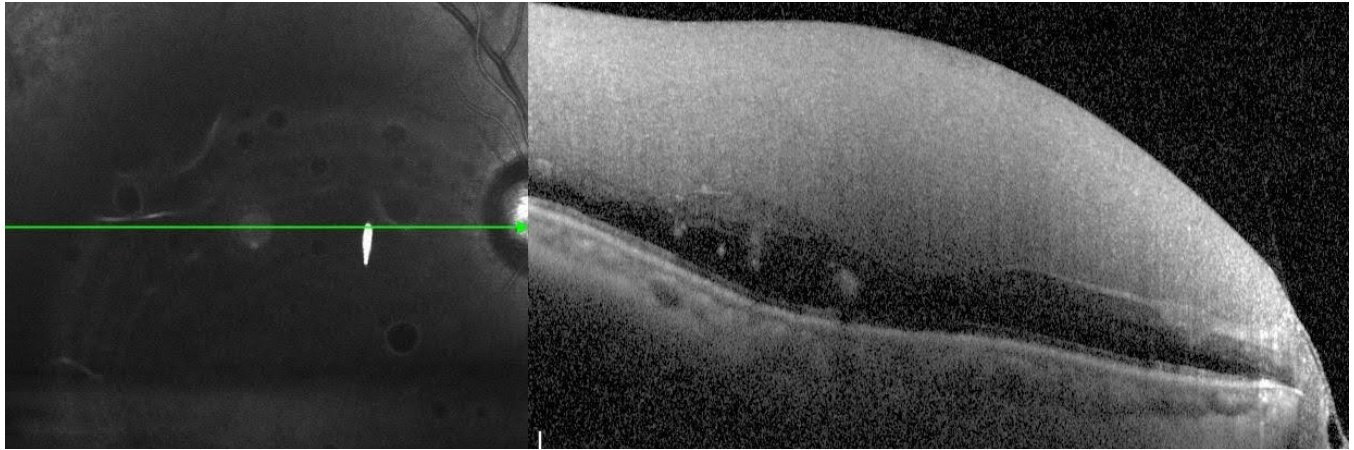


Daniel J. Oh, M.D.  
Cartersville, Cumming,  
Marietta

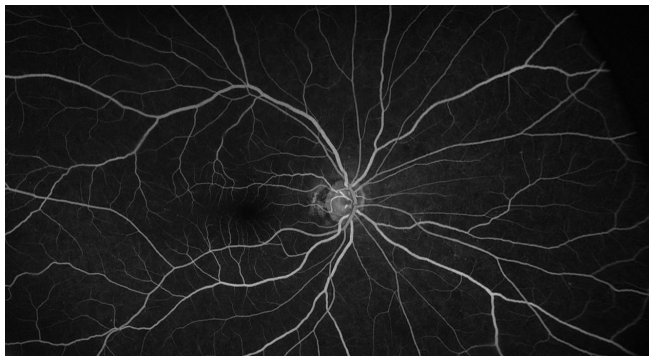


Ross Kennamer-  
Chapman, M.D.  
Macon, Peachtree City,  
Stockbridge

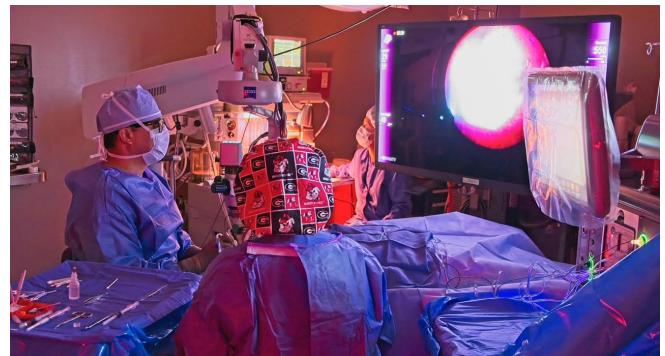
## IMAGING CORNER



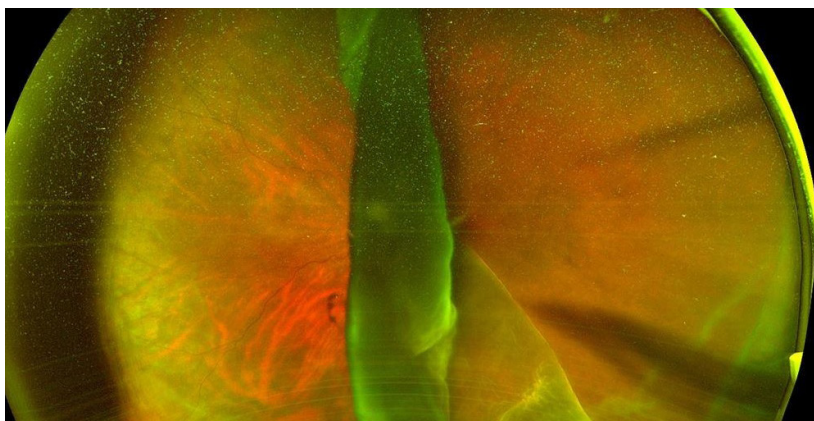
OCT image of a sub-hyaloid hemorrhage centered over the macula



Widefield fluorescein angiography demonstrating peripheral capillary nonperfusion and neovascularization in sickle cell retinopathy



An image from Georgia Retina Surgery center where our surgeons utilize a "heads up" display to visualize the eye in 3D during surgical procedures



Fundus photograph of a giant retinal tear from 12 to 6 o'clock with the retina scrolling onto itself



# CLINICAL CARE DISCUSSION

## Solar Retinopathy

Solar retinopathy, also known as photic retinopathy, eclipse retinopathy, or solar retinitis, is a form of photochemical injury to the retina that occurs due direct or indirect exposure of retinal tissue to high intensity light<sup>1</sup>. While solar retinopathy refers to damage due to sunlight exposure, photochemical injury can also occur due to exposure to welding devices, ophthalmologic operating microscopes, laser pointers, or other bright light sources<sup>3</sup>. Photochemical injury is the transfer of light energy to tissue through biochemical reactions without an elevation in temperature. In solar retinopathy, the injury is typically at the level of the outer retina and retinal pigment epithelium<sup>1</sup>.

The incidence of solar retinopathy rises during and after solar eclipses. Younger patients are typically at greater risk, with one study demonstrating the average age of patients suffering from solar retinopathy to be 16.5 years<sup>4</sup>. This is likely due to the demographics of those who participate in sun-gazing along with the reduced risk of solar retinopathy in older adults due to age related changes in the crystalline lens. The most common presenting symptom is a central scotoma. Other symptoms include color vision changes (dyschromatopsia), metamorphopsia, micropsia, headaches, and light sensitivity<sup>5</sup>.

These symptoms often manifest within hours of the exposure but may be delayed by one or two days. On examination, visual acuity is typically between 20/25-20/100 but can be more significantly reduced depending on the duration and intensity of exposure<sup>1</sup>. Examination in mild cases may be normal, while in more severe cases there may be color changes in the macula. Most often, there is a yellow or white spot at the fovea which may become red over time. After several weeks, a lamellar hole or depression may be visible. Findings are typically bilateral<sup>1</sup>.

Fundus imaging and, in particular, optical coherence tomography (OCT) can be helpful in the diagnosis and monitoring of solar retinopathy. Autofluorescence imaging typically shows an area of central



Ross Kennamer-Chapman, M.D.

hypoautofluorescence surrounded by an area of hyperautofluorescence<sup>6</sup>. Early OCT may show focal hyperreflectivity of the central retina while later OCT typically demonstrates irregularity and disruption of the central retinal pigment epithelial and outer retinal bands (see Figure 1). OCT findings often improve with at least partial reconstitution of the outer retinal layers<sup>4</sup>.

In patients affected by solar retinopathy, symptoms and visual acuity typically begin to improve 7 to 10 days after the inciting incident. Visual recovery is often gradual until approximately 6 months after exposure, at which time vision becomes stable<sup>4</sup>. Most patients achieve a final visual acuity between 20/20-20/40<sup>1</sup>. A minority of patients will have persistent metamorphopsia or central scotoma. The persistence of foveal changes on examination and OCT is variable<sup>4</sup>.

There is no proven treatment for solar retinopathy. In recent years, there has been an increase in social media trends of “sun-meditation” or “sun-gazing for health benefits”, often times without coincident warning of the potential risk of solar retinopathy. Educating people about the risks of solar retinopathy through the news and social media, particularly around the time of a solar eclipse, are important ways to avoid this preventable injury to the retina<sup>7</sup>.

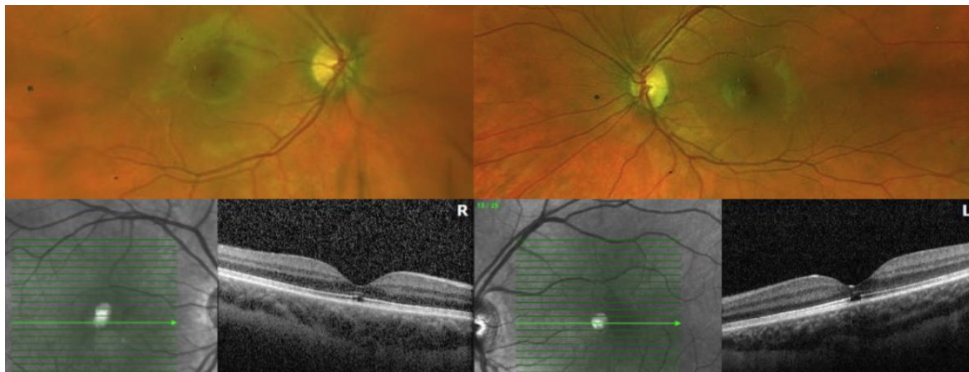


Figure 1. A 30-year-old woman presented two months after “sun meditation,” noting a central scotoma and metamorphopsia in both eyes. Her best-corrected visual acuity was 20/40 in both eyes. Note that her fundus exam was essentially unremarkable, save for a reduced foveal light reflex in both eyes. OCT shows disruption in the ellipsoid zone in both eyes.

#### References:

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## PRACTICE NEWS

### Our Offices Are Now Text Friendly!

We have HIPAA compliant text lines for your offices to schedule patients for a non-urgent appointment to an office of their convenience. We strive to promptly communicate via text but please remember this is not for emergencies. We hope this will facilitate optimal patient care for your patients.

**HAVE A SCHEDULING QUESTION?**  
**DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN TEXT US?**

**TEXT**  
US FOR FASTER UPDATES



A HIPAA secured platform  
that is used to communicate  
directly with our patients

**GEORGIA RETINA**

Braselton 678-528-1101	Cartersville 470-274-2030	Conyers 678-374-7050	Cumming 678-679-4830	Douglasville 678-303-0136	Gainesville 678-317-0326
Gwinnett 678-405-0922	Macon 478-238-9733	Marietta 770-218-1888	Northside 404-255-9096	Peachtree City 770-486-5349	Stockbridge 770-907-9400
Tucker 404-299-5209					

# CLINICAL TRIAL UPDATE

Georgia Retina has a long tradition of commitment to and participation in clinical trials to provide our patients access to new, state-of-the-art preventative, or therapeutic treatments. We partner with the National Eye Institute, some of the nation's top pharmaceutical companies, and other clinical practices to explore the causes and cures for many retinal conditions. Georgia Retina has a dedicated Clinical Research division with an experienced staff that assist patients in enrollment and participation of clinical trials. Through our participation, Georgia Retina has helped pave the way for many new therapies to make it to clinical practice and advance treatment strategies for blinding retinal conditions.

We take special care to ensure that our study patients experience the best medical care possible. This past year we have been active in twenty-six clinical trials for wet age-related macular degeneration, geographic atrophy secondary to dry age-related macular degeneration, retinal vein occlusion, diabetic macular edema, and non-proliferative diabetic retinopathy.

We hope that as you consider where to refer your patients for retinal care, you will keep in mind that Georgia Retina not only provides exceptional care but can also offer your patients the opportunity to enroll in clinical trials thereby offering them new vision saving treatments.

If you have any questions about whether your patient might be eligible to participate in one of our ongoing clinical trials, please call any one of our doctors or contact our Clinical Research Director, Stephanie Campbell ([scampbell@garetina.com](mailto:scampbell@garetina.com)).

## **Current Recruiting Clinical Trials:**

- Wet AMD: Amgen Inc. 20170542, Notal Vision Home OCT
- Geographic Atrophy: Genentech GR40973 GAllego, Gyroscope Therapeutics GTSCOPE
- Diabetic Macular Edema: Alimera 01-20-005 The New Day, Kodiak Sciences KS301 GLIMMER
- Diabetic Retinopathy: Novo Nordisk NN9535-4352 FOCUS
- Branch Retinal Vein Occlusion: Roche GR41984 BALATON
- Central Retinal Vein Occlusion: Roche GR41986 COMINO



# GEORGIA RETINA DOCTOR SPOTLIGHT

## Doctor Oh

### Spotlight with a Georgia Retina Doctor: Dr. Oh

This edition of Spotlight with a Georgia Retina Doctor we sit down with Dr. Oh, who joined the practice in 2022. Dr Oh graduated from Harvard University with a bachelor's and master's degree in chemistry. He received his medical degree from Harvard Medical School, in the Harvard-MIT Health Sciences and Technology track. During medical school, he completed a Howard Hughes Medical Institute research fellowship focusing on diabetic retinopathy. He completed his internal medicine internship at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston and his ophthalmology residency at the Illinois Eye and Ear Infirmary of the University of Illinois at Chicago. During his final year of residency, he was selected as a chief resident. He also completed a premier vitreoretinal fellowship in New York City through a combined program with Columbia University, NYU, Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital, and the Vitreous, Retina, Macula Consultants of New York. Dr. Oh practices in the Cartersville, Cumming and Marietta offices.

### Lightpipe: What is your favorite part about Georgia Retina?

Dr Oh: People. We have a highly collegial group of doctors who work together to help patients. I am fortunate and blessed to receive advice from other doctors about complex patients and how to best take care of them. In addition, our staff at Georgia Retina work hard to ensure the best logistics for the practice. While the work we do is serious, there are always lighthearted moments of each day that we can take to enjoy what we do. The spirit at Georgia Retina is positive and this is the culture that has been created over the many years here.



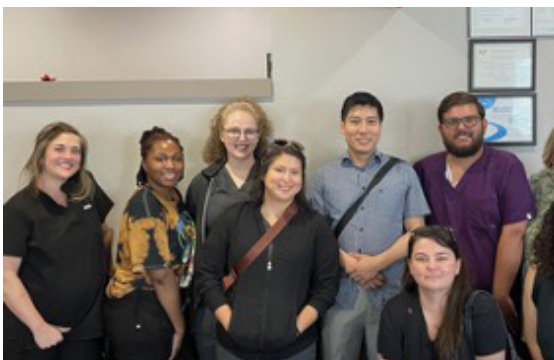
Doctor Oh

**Lightpipe: Tell me about a specific patient experience that is memorable.**

Dr. Oh: There are so many individual patients that we have been able to help as a team. One patient is a monocular patient with a retinal detachment in the other eye that I did surgery for on Christmas last year. Nobody anticipates having a major operation on their only seeing eye on a holiday like Christmas. But we were able to help the patient who is now 20/20! The gratitude and relief of the patient is only matched by mine. Definitely the best Christmas gift ever.

**Lightpipe: What do you see happening at Georgia Retina in the future?**

Dr. Oh: We are always growing – new doctors, new staff, new patients. We are responsible for taking care of most of the patient population in North Georgia with retinal diseases. It is amazing to see the continued growth of offices and staff everyday at Georgia Retina. Every year we are looking at new offices to grow and how to best reach our patients. Also exciting is the field of retina. We have more drugs and treatment options for our patients. It is a wonderful time to be in retina and once these developments are approved, our patients are some of the first in the country to have these treatments. New intravitreal injections and surgical options for our patients will allow for improved outcomes moving forward.



# Thank You for Reading Our Winter 2023 Edition Light Pipe Newsletter!

If you have time, please take a moment to answer a few questions about this year's publication.  
By doing so, you're helping Georgia Retina become an even better practice.

Click here to begin: <https://forms.gle/x8fjHud6SYotLZng6>

## Our Physicians

Michael S. Jacobson, M.D. | Scott I. Lampert, M.D. | Jay B. Stallman, M.D. | Mark J. Rivelles, M.D. | Sean S. Koh, M.D.  
Atul Sharma, M.D. | Robert A. Stoltz, M.D., Ph. D. | John J. Miller, M.D. | Stephanie L. Vanderveldt, M.D. | Hyung Cho, M.D.  
S. Krishna Mukkamala, M.D. | David S. Chin Yee, M.D. | Harpreet "Paul" S. Walia, M.D. | Yogin Patel M.D. | Gregory D. Lee, M.D.  
Ella H. Leung, M.D. | Rahul Komati M.D. | Alexander Bottini, M.D. | Daniel Oh, M.D. | Ross Kenamer-Chapman, M.D.

### Braselton (Now Open)

1255 Friendship Road, Suite 160, Braselton, GA 30517  
Phone: 678-528-1101

### Cartersville

100 Market PI Boulevard, Suite 304, Cartersville, GA 30121  
Phone: 470-274-2030

### Conyers

1501 Milstead Rd., Suite 180, Conyers, GA 30012  
Phone: 678-374-7050

### Cumming

990 Sanders Road, Suite 100, Cumming, GA 30041  
Phone: 678-679-4830

### Douglasville

6095 Professional Pkwy., Suite B-102, Douglasville, GA 30134  
Phone: 678-303-0136

### Gainesville

1488 Jesse Jewell Pkwy., Suite 200, Gainesville, GA 30501  
Phone: 678-317-0326

### Gwinnett (Lawrenceville)

575 Professional Drive, Suite 330, Lawrenceville, GA 30046  
Phone: 678-405-0922

### Macon

6055 Lakeside Commons Drive, Suite 310, Macon, GA 31210  
Phone: 478-238-9733

### Marietta

833 Campbell Hill Street, Suite 300, Marietta, GA 30060  
Phone: 770-218-1888

### Northside (Atlanta)

1100 Johnson Ferry Rd NE, Bldg 2, Suite 593, Sandy Springs, GA 30342  
Phone: 404-255-9096

### Peachtree City

403 Westpark Court, Suite 110, Peachtree City, GA 30269  
Phone: 770-486-5349

### Stockbridge (Now Open)

350 Country Club Dr., Suite A Stockbridge, GA 30281  
Phone: 770-907-9400

### Tucker

1462 Montreal Road W, Suite 412, Tucker, GA 30084  
Phone: 404-299-5209

## Participating Insurance Plans

### Aetna U.S. Healthcare

Allwell  
Ambetter  
Amerigroup Medicaid  
Anthem BCBS  
Blue Choice  
CareSource  
Cigna  
Cigna Health Spring  
Clover

### Corvel

Coventry Healthcare  
Crescent  
First Health  
Galaxy  
Humana  
Kaiser Permanente Dual Choice PPO  
Medical Resource Network  
Medicare

### Medicare Railroad

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Multiplan PPO  
Northeast Georgia Health  
Partners  
Northside Health Network  
NovaNet  
Optum  
Oscar Health Exchange Plan  
PeachState Medicaid

### PHCS (MultiPlan)

Pruitt Health Premier  
Sonder Medicare  
The Empire Plan of NY  
TriCare PPO, HMO  
United Behavioral Health  
United Healthcare Medicare  
USA Managed Care Organization  
WellCare Medicare HMO

We participate with most insurance plans including national and many regional plans. To check on a specific plan, please call one of the numbers above and our knowledgeable call center staff can advise you.

**1-888-GA-RETINA**

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