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ARTicles

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GP news & views from Art Optical Contact Lens, Inc.

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Are you attending the Global Keratoconus Congress 2007?

By Mike Johnson, FCLSA, Director of Consultation Services

Art Optical will be exhibiting at the Global Keratoconus Congress in Las Vegas this coming January. An impressive list of high caliber speakers from around the world will present the latest information on the treatment of Keratoconus with contact lenses and surgical options.

If you are fitting and following a number of Keratoconus patients, this meeting will be of great interest to you. The National Keratoconus Foundation (NKF) estimates that 1 in 2,000 people in the U.S. will be diagnosed with Keratoconus. With the U.S. population now reaching 300 million, it would suggest that there are 150,000 people afflicted with the disease. It is estimated that there are 90,000 to 100,000 GP and other specialty contact lenses manufactured each year for Keratoconus patients. The number of lenses being produced each year would suggest that the rate of occurrence in the U.S. is greater than the 1 in 2,000 estimate from the NKF.

Art Optical will be exhibiting our AKS (Art Keratoconic System) and philosophy at this meeting. AKS is not a "one-design-fits-all-patients" concept. AKS is a combination of designs and fitting tools that allow the practitioner complete control of specifications to maximize fitting success. It is an ideal system for all forms of Keratoconus

including PMD (Pellucid Marginal Degeneration). AKS includes a range of loaner fitting sets for practitioners who do not have access to corneal topography. When topography is available, our experienced consultation staff is ready to assist with the initial design, as well as any design variations necessary during the fitting process.

Art Optical also understands the financial impact Keratoconus has on the patient and their family since contact lenses and fitting fees are not covered under the majority of insurance plans available in the U.S. Our standard fees, discounts and generous warranty policies apply to all lenses and we do not charge add on fees for extremely steep base curves, high minus powers or lenticulation.

The Global Keratoconus Congress is a wonderful opportunity for practitioners to learn how their peers from around the world are addressing and treating Keratoconus. I strongly recommend attending if you have the opportunity. If you are not able to attend but have a new or existing cone patient in your practice, please do not hesitate to contact our Consultation Department for any assistance we can provide that will make the Keratoconic fitting process easier for you.

Industry trends; new technology are focus of European; U.S. events

Art Optical recently attended two contact lens manufacturing meetings to learn about the latest technology and industry trends. EFCLIN (European Federation of the Contact Lens Industry) was held in Venice, Italy in early October. Art Optical joined EFCLIN in 2005 in anticipation of our entry into the European contact lens market, currently scheduled for the second quarter of 2007. GP manufacturers from many European nations, along with several U.S. manufacturers, met to discuss the advancement and longevity of the GP lens industry. Seminars and lectures by renowned speakers from both Europe and the U.S. were also held.

"We are very pleased to see that the current business and manufacturing strategies employed by Art Optical are similar to the top laboratories in Europe," said Thomas E. Anastor, president of Art Optical.

"While European practitioners proportionally fit more GP lenses than U.S. practitioners, their fitting philosophies and design options are very similar to ours in the U.S.," added Mike Johnson, Art Optical's Director of Consultation Services. EFCLIN has over 90 members comprised of manufacturing laboratories, raw material, and service suppliers.

CLMA (Contact Lens Manufacturers Association) held their annual meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona in early November. As a CLMA member, Art Optical attended to learn about current U.S. GP lens trends. Updates on plasma treatment of GP lenses, as well as new developments in scleral and semi-scleral lens designs, were featured.

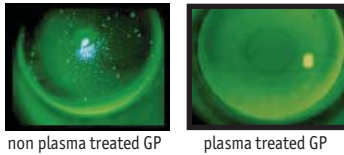
"The CLMA annual meeting is a good venue to learn what will become main stream in the future," said Johnson. "We are already hearing good comments about our current plasma program and will anticipate bringing scleral and semi-scleral lenses to our customers later next year," he continued. The CLMA is comprised of over 80 member manufacturing laboratories and associated industry vendors.

Finally...A GP lens comfort enhancement!

Plasma treated GP lens handling tips

By Jennifer Kirby, ABOC, FCLSA, Consultant

Plasma treatment of GP lenses is becoming more popular, and for good reason! Plasma treated lenses are beneficial to both new and existing GP lens wearers, as it enables them to achieve greater comfort and reduces the amount of complaints related to dry eyes and oily/filmy lenses. While this is a great finding that is being supported by practitioner acceptance and repeat orders, we would like you to be aware of some of the differences between plasma treated GP's and standard GP's:



1. Plasma treated lenses are shipped from our facility in a hydrated state, however, they are not sterile. When you receive the lenses, they still need to be cleaned and prepped for patient dispensing.

2. Speaking of CLEANING, it is important to note that abrasive cleaners, such as Bausch & Lomb Boston® Original and Bausch & Lomb Boston® Advance, will remove the plasma treatment and should be avoided. While this can be a concern for some practitioners hesitant to change solution preferences, remember that we stand behind our recommendations in order to reduce the risk involved in trying products that may be unfamiliar to you. The recommended solutions for plasma treated lenses are Bausch & Lomb Boston Simplus® (Boston® lens materials), Unique pH® (Paragon HDS® and FluoroPerm® lens materials) and Optimum® by Lobob (for Optimum® materials). These items are all available from us and may be ordered as samples or in full size kits.

3. If you choose to store plasma treated lenses, you will need to replace the recommended solution at least once a month.

4. Remember, plasma lens treatment represents the latest development in medical device technology and it delivers a noticeable benefit to your patients. Enhanced comfort for lens wearers is priceless - don't hesitate to recover your costs by setting your fees accordingly.

There are always a few new procedures to get used to when integrating new products in your practice, but it is important to offer patients the latest technology available. So far, the positive feedback we have received on plasma treatment is outweighing the slight inconvenience of altering prescribing and dispensing habits.

Holiday Hours

~Closed~

2:00-3:00 PM EST

Thursday, December 21, 2006

for a holiday celebration with our associates.

Please fax orders during our absence for immediate processing upon our return.

~Closed~

Saturday, December 23, 2006 through
Monday, December 25, 2006

~Closed~

Saturday, December 30, 2006 through
Monday, January 1, 2007

Season's Greetings!

ART Optical

contact lens, Inc.

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MCO students receive warm welcome

By Kelly Indovina, OD, Director of Professional Affairs

Every year, Art Optical proudly welcomes the third year Optometry students from the Michigan College of Optometry for a tour of our facility. This year the students were accompanied by their contact lens instructors, Dr. John Pole and Dr. Renee Mika. We start our tour in Customer Service and Consultation with a review of our data entry system and discussing the required elements of a complete GP lens order. After the students have toured the office, our Technical Process Manager, Dave Freyling, guides them through the manufacturing process. Dave demonstrates how our enhanced production techniques ensure the consistent quality of our contact lenses.

An important part of our mission at Art Optical is the relationship we have with the eye care community. We are active in student education and support the Contact Lens Residency at MCO. It is a great pleasure to have these future Optometrists here and to witness their enthusiasm for our profession.



The wait is over! Art Optical has proudly joined the authorized Paragon CRT laboratory network! We look forward to assisting CRT certified practitioners with ordering and consultation services for their CRT patients, and are eager to introduce new practitioners to the CRT system. **Call us with your CRT orders and inquiries today!**

1.800.253.9364

Fitting post LASIK, RK, and PRK patients with reverse geometry lenses

By Janet Gilman, COT, FCLSA, Consultation Manager

At Art Optical, we recognize the increasing need for reverse geometry lenses for patients who have had LASIK, Radial Keratometry, or PRK. These patients need a good fitting lens to accommodate their flat central corneal curvature and their steeper peripheral cornea. Did you know that we offer reverse geometry lens fitting, design and consultation services for these irregular corneas?

Ideally, for consultation to assist in designing a reverse geometry lens, we need a color topography. The topography should be formulated in either an axial or tangential map using a normalized scale. If this is not available, we have a loaner reverse geometry fitting set you can use to determine the best fit. Then, do an over refraction, and order from there. Another way to design

these intricate lenses for the post refractive patient would be to obtain the pre-surgical keratometer readings, which can help us determine the reverse curve needed for the lens. These lenses normally need a large diameter (10.0 to 10.5) to center well. We will generally start with a 7.0 optic zone on LASIK patients but may go larger on an RK patient since these ablation areas are usually non-symmetrical and larger than that of a LASIK patient. While the lenses in the fitting set are all -2.00, don't be surprised if you tend to need more minus in your final lens, similar to what you find with a Keratoconic patient.

The lenses are manufactured in Bausch & Lomb Boston XO® or Bausch & Lomb Equalens® II material with a full 4 month warranty to cover needed

exchanges. We highly encourage you to speak with a consultant while working with these patients and making lens adjustments. Our depth of experience in post-surgical fitting can help save you chair time and keep your reorders to a minimum.

To Send Topographies via U.S. Mail:

Art Optical Consultation

P.O. Box 1848

Grand Rapids, MI 49501-1848

From your Color Fax Machine:

1-800-421-5991

Via E-mail: topo@artoptical.com

We're always eager to help you help your patients who have had a less than optimum surgical outcome. With reverse geometry lenses, you can improve visual acuity, reduce aberrations, and provide the crisp vision your patients seek.

Post surgical presbyopic patients have few contact lens options

By Nicole Edwards, NCLE-AC, Consultation Supervisor

Art Optical has received numerous requests for presbyopic GP lenses for post surgical (LASIK/RK) patients. Many patients are surprised to find that there are very few such options. The reason for this is due to the central corneal flattening from the refractive surgery which leaves the peripheral cornea steeper than the altered central curvature. Conventional GP lens designs will no longer work. These patients will require a reverse geometry design with a flat central base curve to match the altered cornea and a steeper peripheral curve to match the normal peripheral cornea. At the present time, reverse geometry designs from Art Optical are only available in single vision lens parameters.

We have had some success with the Bausch & Lomb Boston® Envision® design in post RK cases. These corneal surfaces can be quite irregular and the Boston Envision design

tends to mask some of the irregularity that may be there. If there is adequate movement and centration with the Envision design, there is a possibility that our MagniClearplus® design may work. We recommend starting with the Envision design first to see if you can obtain a proper fit, as the warranty is limited on the multifocal design.

Post LASIK is a different story due to the precise central flattening of the cornea that averages 6.0mm in diameter. A reverse geometry design is required to fit these patients properly and all of the optics must occur within the altered field of vision. The only presbyopic correction system currently available is monovision in a reverse geometry design.

Art Optical is always working to provide the best vision possible through the use of GP lenses. Hopefully, the future will bring a presbyopic lens for post surgical patients as well.

2007-2008 CLMA Awards Announced:

Art Optical's manufacturing excellence is consistently recognized

Art Optical Contact Lens, Inc. has been named as a recipient of the prestigious Seal of Manufacturing Excellence Award for the years 2007-2008. The Contact Lens Manufacturer's Association (CLMA) recently released the results of their annual field test for oxygen permeable contact lenses and recognized Art Optical among the deserving laboratories.

"I am very proud to be a recipient of

the Seal of Excellence Award again this year," said Thomas E. Anastor, President of Art Optical. "We have a team of very skilled associates that are dedicated to quality GP lens manufacturing and receiving the Seal of Excellence Award is a great affirmation of our efforts."

The Seal of Excellence is only awarded to CLMA member laboratories that pass an independent evaluation of GP lens quality. The voluntary program

has oxygen permeable lenses ordered anonymously by practitioners and tested for eight different criteria by an independent panel of experts in a double blind study. Art Optical is proud to have earned the Seal of Excellence award each year since its inception in 1994.

Established in 1931, Art Optical is the world's leading independent producer of custom-manufactured GP lenses.