

Greetings from the editors desk!

I hope everyone has had a terrific start to this New Year.

“The only difference between men and boys is the price of their toys” — I.M. MacDonald from his Editorial in the Canadian Journal of Ophthalmology.^[1]

Ophthalmology is a versatile, yet unique branch among medical specialties. The transparency of the main components of the eye enables us to view the details of its structure and abnormalities, in a manner not possible for most other parts of the human body. A plethora of technology has come into play, taking advantage of this marvel and paving a way for innovations in technology for the diagnosis and treatment of a variety of ophthalmic conditions.

Imaging in Ophthalmology has grown in an exponential manner. Our field is the one speciality where technology is so rapidly evolving that we now have a whole Speciality Unit to deal specifically with the research and experimental aspects of imaging in ophthalmology.

Improvements in hardware, lighting, processors, and detectors have led us to a point where imaging is not only important, but necessary. Imaging is a diagnostic aid and specially helps in documentation.

Advances such as high resolution imaging, using adaptive optics^[2] in wave front analysis, for understanding ocular aberration, and facilitation of refractive surgery and enhancement of retinal imaging have taken us to new heights and closer to attaining that near perfect vision for our patients. Principles by Gullstrand, from a century ago, are still the basis for a majority of our equipment. Scheimpflug imaging and analysis is largely gaining popularity, for understanding corneal and crystalline lens characteristics.

Ultrasonography, Confocal microscopy, and Scanning laser polarimetry, to name a few, have changed the way we diagnose and treat.

Newer techniques of imaging are being tried for microcellular diagnostics of neoplastic cells.

These machines, although expensive, are a new window to the world of ophthalmology, which we thought we knew a lot about. Moreover their maintenance and training of personnel to handle these equipment, sometimes makes white elephants of them. There are still so many gray areas and so much we have to learn about the eye. Patient safety with some procedures still poses as a Pandora's Box.

There is no doubt, however, that in our practice it is imperative to choose the appropriate technology and utilize it to the fullest.

After being inspired by the likes of Steve Jobs and exploring technology as an aid to the clinician.

In my last editorial I covered various aspects of the uses of Smart phones, iPad, and gadgets in Ophthalmology, and now I would like to supplement that with the knowledge I have recently gained through my friends.

As a testing tool, there are various downloadable applications for smart phones, which have the facility for pediatric optotypes visual acuity test, duochrome test, tests for color vision, contrast sensitivity, optokinetic nystagmus (OKN) drum, pupil gauge, and the Worth 4 dot test.

There are numerous calculators for visual acuity conversions, intraocular lens (IOL) calculations, glaucoma risk, and amplitude of accommodation.

There are applications available where you can download fundus photos and optical coherence tomography (OCT) of the patient directly to your mobile devices.

We have available attachments to the iPhone, which can connect up to the slit lamp, enabling us to take anterior segment pictures that are so clear, one will really be amazed by the quality.

Simply put in the words of a brilliantly inspired ophthalmologist dedicated to utilizing technology to the fullest, “a Smartphone that contains no downloaded applications, particularly in the hands of an ophthalmologist, is quite simply a waste of valuable resources”.^[3]

This influence clearly reflects in this issue. I would like to specially highlight the articles titled ‘Principles and practice of Digital photography in Ophthalmology’ by Dr. Bipasha Mukherjee. Dr. Jay Chhablani’s article on ‘Smartphones in Ophthalmology’ throws light on the further advantages.

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