

# Resources for Retina Specialists for COVID-19 Education



Stay on top of the latest news by consulting these resources.

BY JAYANTH SRIDHAR, MD

**Y**ou can zoom in and zoom out on the roles of retina specialist. From a bird's-eye view, we are part of the general community of physicians serving as pillars of the medical community. Zoom in, and we are ophthalmologists who help lead the world of eye care. Zoom in further, and we are retina specialists who primarily manage diseases of the retina and vitreous.

In the COVID-19 era, it can be difficult to know where to turn for reliable information, and information that you generally need as a physician might not be the same information you need specifically as a retina specialist. Here are a few resources you can use for updates as this public health crisis evolves.

## FOR THE PHYSICIAN

Physicians are local doctors who need information on COVID-19 from a logistical perspective. They need to know which local services are available, as these services may affect how patients visit a clinic.

Going to resources such as a local newspaper to figure out how COVID-19 is going to affect your immediate area allows you to keep up on the day-to-day happenings of your community and, more specifically, your patients' lives. Fortunately, most newspapers have taken down paywalls for COVID-19–related online articles and publish daily updates.

Ultimately, physicians are scientists who need to know the latest research. *The New England Journal of Medicine* and *The Lancet* are two of the best peer review journals publishing the most recent data about COVID-19. Both journals'

websites have a designated COVID-19 resource center with the most up-to-date information about the crisis. You can read a summary of the latest findings from these and other journals elsewhere in this issue.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is a source of information on how to handle your practice and patients during the COVID-19 crisis. The CDC website's section titled "Information for Healthcare Professionals" is particularly useful. This website is updated regularly throughout the day, making it a prime resource for everyone.

## FOR THE OPHTHALMOLOGIST

Ophthalmologists need specialized information about COVID-19's ocular implications. The AAO's online content includes recommendations for ophthalmologists, practice managers, and patients. The AAO regularly updates its recommendations as new data and research are available and suggests tactics for mitigating the spread of coronavirus. Familiarizing yourself with the recommendations of the AAO during this time may be important from a medicolegal perspective as the COVID-19 crisis evolves.

Eyewire is a news source for ophthalmologists who wish to stay informed about how COVID-19 is affecting the specialty at large. Eyewire's news website (Eyewire.news) is updated regularly with breaking news ranging from peer-reviewed literature to medical society protocols. During noncrisis moments, it is a clearinghouse for all news items in ophthalmology; during this particular period, it serves as our specialty's most robust source of COVID-19 information.

Eyetube has been hosting video webinars about COVID-19 in ophthalmology. Sessions are hosted by Zoom video conference and are archived on Eyetube.net. Audio-only sessions are distributed via the podcasts *New Retina Radio* and *Ophthalmology Off the Grid*.

### FOR THE RETINA SPECIALIST

The ASRS has been the premium source for retina-specific information as this crisis evolves. The ASRS online guide for retina surgeons explains which surgeries should be canceled and which surgeries should continue as scheduled. The ASRS website also offers coding information and tips, printouts for practice use, and suggestions for tools to use if you are seeing patients, such as slit-lamp shields.

Social media is extremely helpful as well to get a sense of the retina landscape. As a member of the Young Retina Forum Telegram group (run by Mitul Mehta, MD, and Hemang Pandya, MD; email [mcmehtha@gmail.com](mailto:mcmehtha@gmail.com) to join), it has been illuminating to see different practice patterns across the country and get real-time news on changes. Some useful Twitter accounts (this is not an all-encompassing list) to follow are @vitreouscutter (Shriji Patel, MD), @drvihau (Vi Hau, MD, PhD), @drrishisingh (Rishi Singh, MD), and @surgeonretina (Rajesh Rao, MD).



A unique way to receive retina-specific updates is through podcasts. I host *Straight From the Cutter's Mouth* ([www.retinapodcast.com](http://www.retinapodcast.com)), a discussion-based podcast which typically focuses on retina-related issues such as practice patterns, surgical approaches, and journal clubs. In a recent episode, we discussed COVID-19 with AAO CEO David W. Parke, MD. *Straight From the Cutter's Mouth* has been monitoring news sources. If there are drastic policy changes or recommendations, we will record an episode with updates for the audience.

### CONCLUSION

As new data and information become available, it is essential to stay up to date so that you can properly prepare your practice and treat your patients. Knowing where to look is the first step. Stay safe, stay healthy, and be well my friends. Together we will get through this! ■

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