Retinal Scans Allow Doctors to See What is Otherwise Invisible to the Human Eye

Joel Morrison February 10, 2014

Patient getting a retinal eye exam.

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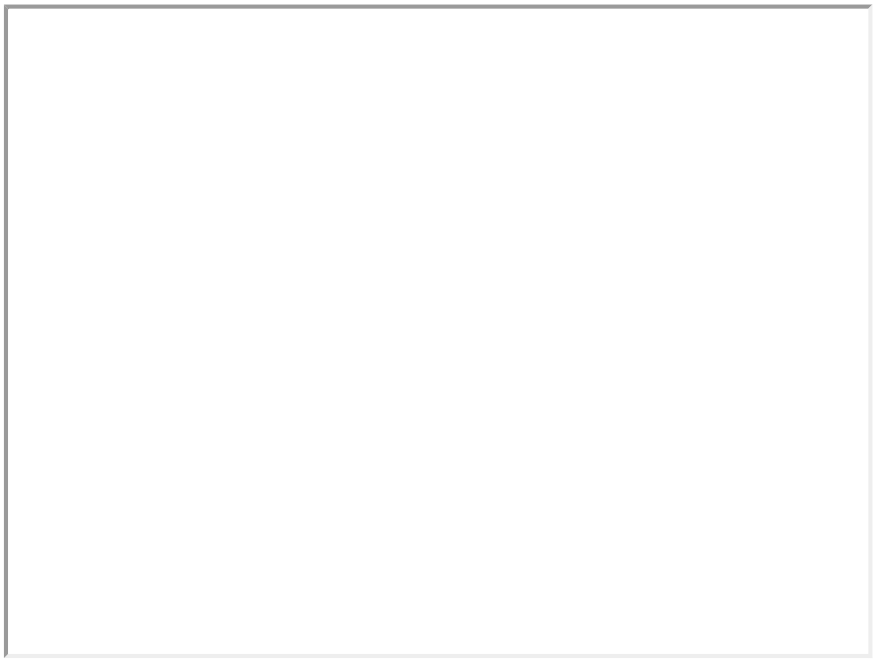
Frisco, TX - One of the most important specialized activities of an optometrist is to ensure the health of a patient's retina. Many important eye diseases as well as other diseases affecting your body can actually be detected by examining your retina.

The retina is the part of the eye that controls how we see the world around us. While it is said that your eyes are the "windows on your soul", your retina can be described as a window on your body's overall health. With Williams Eye Care's retinal scan technology called *Optomap,* Dr. James Williams and his team of optometrists at Williams Eye Care can look inside of your retina like never before and detect underlying health problems.

Your retina is the only place in the body where blood vessels can be seen directly. This means, in addition to eye conditions, signs of other diseases (for example, stroke, heart disease, hypertension and diabetes) can be seen in the retina. Diabetes, for example, affects the eyes and the kidneys and is a leading cause of blindness. Retinopathy occurs when diabetes damages the tiny blood vessels inside the retina and slowly degrades our vision. Other diseases such as age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma and high blood pressure can also be detected.

Optometrists perform retinal scans on all patients, to check their general eye health, but this new technology has the power to see much more than what is on the surface. "This newest technology gives us a high resolution view of 80% of a patient's retina in seconds," reported Dr. James Williams of Williams Eye Care. "We can see the health of cells and the vascular system of the eye which are strong predictors of current and future diseases, many of which can be caught and treated before significant damage is done."

The retina also provides evidence of other systemic diseases. "We can see indications or symptoms of high blood pressure or hypertension and diabetes," stated Dr. Williams. While a traditional ophthalmoscope allows the optometrist to see only 10 degrees of the retina at any given time, the new technologies allows doctors to see almost the entire retina, and capture a highly detailed image of over 80 degrees of the retina in one picture. Additionally, the high-resolution digital images can be easily stored for later use in the patient's history. "This provides us with a baseline of our patients' retinal health that we can refer back to this at other points during their care to see if the retina is deteriorating or maintaining health," said Dr. Williams. "Because the Optomap produces a high resolution picture, I am also able to show my patients exactly what I am seeing so that they can understand their eye's health or pathology."



Optomap retinal scan technology is now available at Williams Eye Care and is part of the comprehensive eye examination provided at the practice.

For further information about Retina scans and retinal health, please contact your Frisco Eye Doctor:

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