

Equipment improves eye care at MBMC

by Larry Arnold

The UW Health ophthalmologists who perform cataract surgeries at Hess Memorial Hospital have a new diagnostic device to be used prior to surgery. It is called an Intra Ocular Lens (IOL) master.

Gary Sterken, M.D., and Heather Potter, M.D., are UW Health ophthalmologists who alternate seeing patients and performing surgeries in Mauston on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Dr. Sterken, in describing the IOL master, said: "The patient puts his chin on the rest and looks at a red target beam. The device shines a laser beam into the eye, directly to the focal point. Then it compares the beam of light that is reflected off the back of the eye with one that is reflected from the cornea. They have slightly different wave lengths."

recheck questionable results from Mauston tests using the device in Madison, but for my patients it meant a drive. Now we not only have the ability to double check our results in Mauston, but we have the latest in technology here as well."

In explaining the advantages of using the IOL master, Dr. Sterken said: "The previous system used ultrasound. When it gently touched the cornea, it beamed ultrasound to reflect off different structures of the eye."

He added: "The act of touching the eye indented the cornea. While this is minute, it is enough to shorten the eyeball a little bit; enough to affect the results."

The doctor noted that there are patients who have a cataract which is so dense that the cloudy lens will not produce a reading on the IOL master. When that occurs, the ultrasound



Dr. Sterken posed as the patient being diagnosed by technician Jennifer Larson.

He said, "It is complex and incredibly precise; 10 times more accurate than the previous machine, which was already incredibly accurate." The measurements taken by the IOL master are the length of the eyeball (axial length) and the curvature of the cornea. The device provides a printout of the readings.

Dr. Sterken's colleague, Dr. Heather Potter, had this to say about the IOL master: "I'm very excited to have the IOL master in Mauston. It measures eyes in a different way than ultrasound and manual instruments. It is less invasive and is generally considered slightly more accurate in the majority of patients. I often would

must be used. Dr. Sterken said, "I emphasize that the ultrasound method is still incredibly accurate."

The technicians who work in the Mauston UW Health clinic are all trained in the use of the IOL master. "They do a great job and I'm proud of the work they do," the doctor said. The technicians are: Jennifer Larson, Amie Markofski, Cathy Cass and Michel Messer.

Dr. Sterken added: "The IOL master gives significantly more accurate measurements of patients' eyeballs; it is very quick and very convenient and is very easily used by the technicians." He continued, "When I suggested that we would like to use

Free Diabetes Month Presentation 'Diabetes: The eyes have it too'

by Kathy Behnke

Over time, the high blood glucose levels caused by diabetes can lead to complications in the heart, blood vessels, nerves, kidneys and feet. By learning to take care of yourself with diet, exercise, and medication, you can better manage your diabetes and prevent and/or delay its complications.



Gary Sterken, M.D.

Diabetes can also lead to eye diseases resulting in vision loss or even blindness. Staying educated on ways to improve your diabetes health may be the difference between keeping and losing your vision.

To take good care of your eyes you should do your best to keep your blood sugars under control, and maintain good blood pressure readings. If problems are caught early, you may be able to save your sight. However, not all eye complications produce symptoms, so it is important that you have a dilated eye exam each year.

this new technology at Mauston, UW officials quickly agreed, even though it is very expensive. That illustrates the strong commitment that UW Health has to our clinic in Mauston."

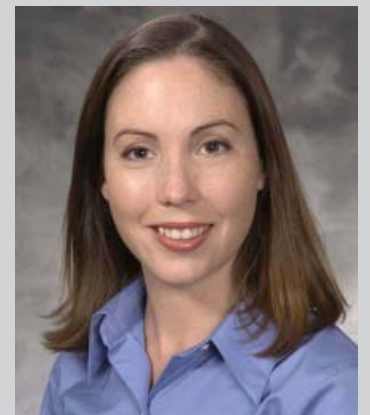
Other UW Health doctors who see eye patients at Mauston include: Barbara Blodi, M.D., a retina specialist; Todd Perkins, M.D., a glaucoma specialist; and Janet Cushing, an optometrist.

As my interview with Dr. Sterken was finishing, he said: "We enjoy coming to Mauston to see patients and

Always be on the lookout for symptoms of eye complications. They can include: blurred or double vision, seeing spots, eye pain, pressure in the eye(s), trouble reading, and worsening of side vision. If you experience any of these, talk to your eye doctor right away.

To learn more about diabetes and your eyes, attend the special Diabetes Month presentation at Hess Memorial Hospital in Mauston Tuesday, November 27 at 7 p.m. Hear from two UW Health specialists that visit Mile Bluff every month. Optometrist Janet Cushing, and ophthalmologist Gary Sterken will present, "Diabetes: The eyes have it too." You will learn about prevention, warning signs, treatment options, and more. Don't miss your opportunity to talk to these experts in eye health!

This program is brought to you by Mile Bluff Medical Center and UW Health. For more information or to reserve your spot for the event, call 608-847-6161 x272 today.



Janet Cushing, O.D.

are proud of the quality of eye care that we can provide at Mile Bluff. We have a great relationship with the entire medical staff, as well as the staff in the OR [operating room]." He also noted that "The area is fortunate to have Dr. John Schaefer practicing optometry in Mauston. He recently referred a patient to us for an obscure eye problem and his diagnosis was right on the money."