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Dear Patients, Neighbors, and Friends:

Last year we introduced “Back to School Day” at our office. On that day our three doctors only examined school-aged children (except for emergencies, of course) and our technicians and staff were encouraged to think young in order to provide an enjoyable experience for all. It went off like a charm and many patients (over 50!) went out of their way to compliment us on the idea.

It won't be long before children will be going back to school, and we feel very strongly about the importance of including eye examinations with customary back-to-school preparations. After all, experts agree that 85% of what we learn comes from what we see -- good eyesight is, indeed, an important part of learning. So...

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 20<sup>th</sup> WILL BE OUR 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL “BACK TO SCHOOL DAY”:**

We encourage children and adults to have their eyes examined regularly, but on Back to School Day our doctors will schedule exams for only school-aged children (ages 4 to 17). Each child will have a comprehensive eye examination, including vision exam, complete eye health assessment, and binocular vision evaluation. We will also provide children with *free* Optomap<sup>®</sup> Retinal Images (this is a special photograph of the retina which helps to detect eye abnormalities). And, to sweeten the deal, each child will receive a prescription for a delicious ice cream cone, redeemable at Rancatore's just down the street from our office! Of course, you will need to call our office at 617-484-1414 to schedule an appointment for your child on Back to School Day. We suggest you call as soon as possible to get a convenient time slot.

**SOFT CONTACT LENSES WITH EYE MEDICINES:** MIT's Technology Review reported that a company called Eyenovations has developed an alternative to eye drops for patients with glaucoma – contact lenses that can deliver drugs to the eye for a month or more. The start-up company also believes that the lenses could prove useful for treating several other eye conditions and for delivering antibiotics following eye surgery. The product is currently going through the approval process. We already use contact lenses for more than just vision improvement. Today contact lenses are used as a special eye bandage for corneal scratches and other conditions.

**THAT BUMP ON THE EYE:** We often are asked about small bumps on the eye. One type of bump is a fleshy-appearing growth called pinguecula (ping-gwek-u-lah). They may be yellow, grey, white, or even colorless, and are found within the conjunctiva (the covering over the white part of the eye or sclera) in the space between the eyelids. Most of the time they are benign, but should be watched in case they migrate toward the pupil. They are typically associated with sun exposure, and can be a cause of dry eyes. We look for pingueculae each time we examine your eyes.

**GLASSES ARE MORE COMPLICATED THAN YOU THINK (PART TWO):** There are numerous factors that go into a proper pair of eyeglasses to allow for the most clear and comfortable vision. In our newsletter last fall, we discussed the importance of frame selection. In this newsletter, we shall address interpupillary distance, or “PD,” which is the distance between the centers of each eye. Lenses are aligned in the frame so that the optical center (the center of the lens) and the center of the pupil coincide. This allows for comfortable vision without prismatic distortion (which could cause a pulling sensation on the eyes). The near PD is different from the distance PD because eyes converge when looking up close. Our office uses a monocular pupillometer to measure interpupillary distance as accurately as possible. We are proud to report that, for the fifth year in a row, our office was selected Number One Optical in the Belmont Citizen-Herald Readers Choice Awards. We like to think this has to do with our attention to detail in selecting and making custom eyewear.

**SUMMER BABIES MORE LIKELY TO BE NEARSIGHTED:** Research suggests that babies born in the summer months may have an increased risk of moderate and severe myopia. An item in the Chicago Tribune reported that “a growing body of scientific research shows the month you were born can predispose you to certain traits, affecting everything from your personality and mental health, to your lifespan.” Israeli researcher Yossi Mandel, M.D. explained that light exposure can change the balance between dopamine and melatonin, and this balance is known to participate in the eye-growth control mechanism. Larger eye lengths are often associated with nearsightedness. And don’t forget to bring your babies in for an eye examination! Our doctors give free eye exams for babies ages 6 to 12 months, as we are providers for the InfantSEE™ program, created by the American Optometric Association.

**SO THE BLIND CAN SEE:** There has been a great many reports lately of very innovative and novel ways to deliver some sight to heretofore blind people. Computers and cameras implanted in the lens of the eye have been suggested to break down wavelengths. Readers should be aware that, while we applaud these pioneering scientific breakthroughs, we need to warn people that the “vision” that results will not necessarily be like the vision to which most of us are accustomed. Although today these inventions can provide only rudimentary vision, we are hopeful that technology will improve even more in the future.

Don’t forget to check out our website at [www.belmontoptometrists.com](http://www.belmontoptometrists.com) for updates on what’s new in our office.

Sincerely,



Linda Bennett, O.D.



Melanie Macbeth, O.D.



Rebecca Maida, O.D.