

March 1 - Today is Chelsie's birthday! Happy Birthday!

March 7 - Dr. Champer is in our office today

March 9 - Dr. Brookings is in our office today

March 11 - Daylight Savings Time begins, time to "Spring Forward" with your clocks!

March 13 - Our office will be closed this afternoon for our monthly staff meeting

March 15 - Happy Birthday today to Kelly A!

March 17 - Happy St. Patrick's Day!

March 21 - The Club Carefree 50 movie of the month screens today at 1:30 p.m. at the Roseburg Cinemas. Doors open at 12:30 p.m.

March 28 - Dr. Karth is in our office today

Vision and the Private Pilot

How cataracts could throw a wrench in your flight plans

Sometimes, even the most skilled private pilots need an eye exam to ensure that their vision is at an adequate level for flight. With periodic flight physicals, there can be a long lag in between appointments. In that time, a pilot's eye could develop a cataract, causing a drop in vision to a level lower than the physical requires to pass. Because it can happen before his or her next physical examination, the pilot would have no indication that his or her vision is suddenly creating an unsafe situation for both the pilot and passengers. Because of this, a pilot goes through a "self-certification" process every day before a flight.

If a pilot notices a decrease in vision during self-certification, he or she should schedule a complete eye exam. To ensure all possible problems are addressed, this should be completed well before the next flight physical.

If vision is still adequate to fly, but cataracts formation is causing decreased sight, surgery or treatment could be scheduled after passing the flight physical. Once the short surgery and healing process are complete, the surgeon fills out an FAA summary of clinical history and current visual performance (form 8500-7), and flying can resume.

Just as in flying where it is important not to get behind the power curve, it's equally important not to get behind in vision if a pilot is going to maintain flight privileges. You can schedule an appointment today with our doctors to address any of your vision concerns by calling 541-672-2020.

Study: Stem Cells may Aid Vision in People Suffering from Blindness

Two legally blind women appeared to gain some vision after receiving an experimental treatment using embryonic stem cells, scientists recently reported. While embryonic stem cells were first isolated more than a decade ago, most of the research has been done in lab animals. The new results come from the first tests in humans for a vision problem. Researchers caution the work is still very preliminary.

Last summer, each patient was injected in one eye with cells derived from embryonic stem cells at the University of California, Los Angeles. One patient had the "dry" form of age-related macular degeneration, the most common cause of blindness. The other had a rare disorder known as Stargardt disease that causes

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Club Carefree 50 movie of the month

Dr. Weston and Umpqua Bank are sponsoring the movie of the month for Club Carefree 50. Since it is a first-run movie, the exact film will not be determined until four days prior to the screening. It will be showing at Roseburg Cinema on 1750 NW Hughes St. on March 21, the third Wednesday of the month.

Doors open between 12:30 and 12:45, door prizes will be handed out shortly after, and the movie starts at 1:30 p.m. We hope to see you there!

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serious vision loss. There's no cure for either eye problem.

After four months, both showed some improvement in reading progressively smaller letters on an eye chart. The Stargardt patient, a graphic artist in Los Angeles, went from seeing no letters at all to being able to read five of the largest letters.

However, experts said the improvement of the macular degeneration patient might be mostly psychological, because the vision in her untreated eye appeared to get better too. Both patients remain legally blind despite their improvements, said experts not connected with the study.

Scientists at UCLA and Advanced Cell Technology, which funded the work, said they were pleased that there have been no signs of rejection or abnormal growth months after the procedure. Embryonic stem cells can transform into any cell of the body. Scientists are hoping to harness embryonic stem cells to create a variety of replacement tissues for transplant, but their use has been controversial because human embryos have to be destroyed to harvest the cells.

The latest news comes two months after Geron Corp. halted its stem cell-based experiment for spinal cord injuries, saying it planned to focus instead on two experimental cancer drugs. Meanwhile, ACT is pushing ahead with its blindness study. The company said Monday that surgeons in London injected a patient with Stargardt disease last week.

"I've never seen a more skilled ophthalmologist than Dr. Weston."

Retired Roseburg ophthalmologist John Unruh was back in the operating room recently, this time as a patient of Dr. Jon-Marc Weston. "I've observed cataract procedures all over the world, and I've never seen a better surgeon," Unruh said. "I now have perfect vision!"

When asked about operating on Unruh, Weston said, "During his career, Unruh was the first in Oregon to perform modern cataract surgery. It is now considered the standard of care, and it was an honor to restore his vision using the technology he pioneered."



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Douglas County's Specialists in:

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- Macular Degeneration
- Glaucoma
- Dry Eyes / Low Vision

Jon-Marc Weston, MD, FACS
Steven Tronnes, OD, FAO

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