



## HAWAII MACULA AND RETINA INSTITUTE: LEADING RESEARCH IN HAWAII

**Hawaii Macula and Retina Institute** – An exciting new name for Hawaii's first and most respected retina research program. Over the past 20 years, Retina Consultants of Hawaii (RCH) has developed an international reputation for its research and led every major new advance in the treatment of blinding retinal diseases, while often bringing the newest treatments to Hawaii's patients much earlier than they were available to the general public. We have also published major papers every year in the best and most respected journals in ophthalmology, helping to contribute important knowledge to the world literature. All of the most important trials leading to new FDA-approved therapy have been performed through studies led by the doctors and the research team at RCH. Because of this strong tradition and reputation, we have renamed the RCH research division as the Hawaii Macula and Retina Institute.

**Come visit our exciting new website for  
Hawaii Macula and Retina Institute at [www.hawaiimacula.com](http://www.hawaiimacula.com)**



### A LETTER FROM THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR

Our research team at **Hawaii Macula and Retina Institute** is led by our research director, Jacqueline Shen Suiter. Jackie has done an incredible job of building the Hawaii Macula and Retina Institute into one of the most respected research centers for multi-centered trials. Our research team is constantly being sought out by the most important studies by the leading pharmaceutical research companies in the world.

In recognition of the global respect for our research, I recently participated in a global expert panel on the management of polypoidal choroidal vasculopathy, a leaking blood vessel problem under the retina, which is now being increasingly recognized. Eighteen world experts from almost every continent met in Singapore in June of 2013 to try to guide the direction of future research in this condition, which is a subtype of exudative or wet macular degeneration. This condition is especially common in Asian populations, so it is frequently seen here in Hawaii due to the large Asian population here. However, as emphasized by me in an Editorial published in 2012 in the main journal for retina specialists, *RETINA*, this disease is more commonly being recognized in all patients of all ethnicities now due to the more frequent use of proper imaging including indocyanine green (ICG) angiography. *(continued Page 2)*

**HAWAII MACULA AND RETINA INSTITUTE**  
*Revolutionary Research with World-Wide Impact*

Retina Consultants of Hawaii  
98-1079 Moanalua Road, Suite 470  
Aiea, Hawaii 96701

To subscribe to the newsletter, or to receive an electronic copy, please e-mail us at [rch@retinahi.com](mailto:rch@retinahi.com).



## Recent & Upcoming RCH Academic Presentations

June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013 - Pettit Lecture at Jules Stein Eye Institute @ UCLA, Polypoidal Choroidal Vasculopathy - A Subretinal Neovascular Process, Presented by Gregg T. Kokame, MD

June 21-24, 2013 - The PCOOS Annual Meeting at Grand Wailea Resort, Maui, Hawaii. The Eyes Role in Circadian Rhythms, Polypoidal Choroidal Vasculopathy. Featured Speaker - Raymond Wee, MD

September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2013 - Midwest Ocular Angiography Conference, St. Andrews, Scotland, Ocular Lymphoma, Presented by Gregg T. Kokame, MD

September 26-29, 2013 Retina Society, Beverly Hills, California, Treatment of Intraocular Lymphoma with Intravitreal Methotrexate, Presented by James C. Lai, MD, Pearl2: High-Dose Lucentis for PCV: 6 Month Results, Presented by Gregg T. Kokame, MD

November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013 – AAO Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA, AAO Instruction Course 175 - Diagnosis and Treatment of Polypoidal Choroidal Vasculopathy  
Clinical Instructor: Gregg T. Kokame, MD

December 6-7, 2013 - Asia Pacific Vitreoretinal Society Meeting, Nagoya, Japan  
Featured Symposium, Update on Macular Surgery, Macular Hole Surgery From Conception to Present Day Management  
RETINAWS - Surgical Instruction Course  
Presented by Gregg T. Kokame, MD

For additional information on any of these events, please contact Joel Nicholas; [joel@retinahi.com](mailto:joel@retinahi.com) or 808-380-8059

**Iritis/Vitritis/Uveitis Clinic**  
**9/27/13 and 12/27/13 with**  
**Annabelle Okada, MD, D. M.Sc.**

**Pali Momi Medical Center**  
98-1079 Moanalua, Suite 470  
Aiea, HI 96701  
(808) 487-8928

**Kuakini Medical Plaza**  
321 N. Kuakini, Suite 307  
Honolulu, HI 96817  
(808) 523-6131

**Queen's POB I**  
1380 Lusitana Street Suite 506  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-545-7036

**Neighbor Island Clinics**  
Toll Free (877) VIT-RET1 (848-7381)

**Websites**  
[www.retinahi.com](http://www.retinahi.com)  
[www.hawaiimacula.com](http://www.hawaiimacula.com)

### A LETTER FROM THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

One of the biggest honors for me and our RCH research team is that I was invited back to present our research on polypoidal choroidal vasculopathy for the PETTIT Lecture at the Jules Stein Eye Institute at UCLA, one of the top five ophthalmology programs in the nation, and consistently voted as the best program in the western USA. This honor is one of the highlights of the UCLA academic year, and goes to an investigator, who has achieved respect for clinical research during his or her career.

Thank you to all of our referring doctors, who entrust the care of their patients to us, and to all of

**Dr. Batley Mondino, Chairman of the Jules Stein Eye Institute presenting to Dr. Gregg Kokame honorary plaque celebrating Pettit Lecture**



**2013 Jules Stein Pettit Lecture**  
*Thomas Pettit was one of the founding professors of the Jules Stein Eye Institute. The Pettit Lecture is awarded to clinical researchers with outstanding research throughout their careers, and are invited back to the institute to share their findings with residents, fellows, and faculty. Congratulations, Dr. Kokame, the 11th Thomas H Pettit Lecturer*

our patients, who have participated in our clinical trials. A successful research program can only happen with the support of the community, the doctors and the patients. We will continue to work hard to provide Hawaii with the very best care for retinal diseases available anywhere in the world. The **Hawaii Macula and Retina Institute** has a very bright future with the staff and research team and physician researchers of Retina Consultants of Hawaii.

With Warm Regards,

**Gregg T. Kokame, MD, MMM**  
Medical Director, The Hawaii Macula and Retina Institute  
Managing Partner, Retina Consultants of Hawaii

**This research is only possible with physicians, who have the type of respected training and dedication, which allows our center to be chosen by national research protocols.**

**All these institutions are top-ranked ophthalmology programs, as cited in *US News and World Report*.**

**Duke University and Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins Hospital (James C Lai, MD)**

**Barnes Retina Institute and Massachusetts Eye & Ear at Harvard (Raymond Wee, MD)**

**Bascom Palmer Eye Institute and Jules Stein Eye Institute at UCLA (Gregg T Kokame, MD)**

### US News & World Report 2012-2013: Best Ophthalmology Programs

RCH trained at the **top ranked hospitals for Ophthalmology**



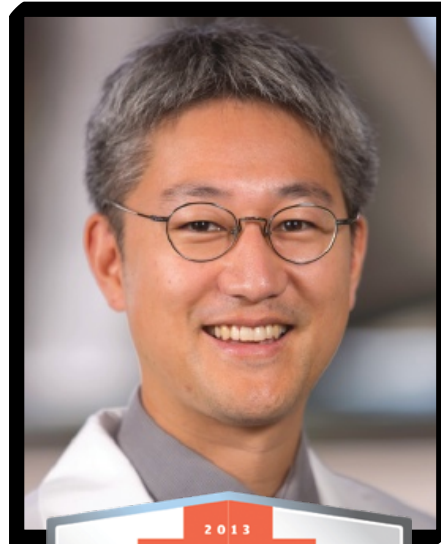
Rank	Hospital
1	Bascom Palmer Eye Institute @ Univ of Miami
2	Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins Hospital
3	Wills Eye Hospital, Philadelphia
4	Mass Eye & Ear Infirmary, Harvard Univ.
5	Jules Stein Eye Institute @ UCLA
6	University of Iowa Hospital & Clinics, Iowa City
7	Duke University Medical Center, Durham, N.C.
8	Doheny Eye Institute, USC
9	Cleveland Clinic, Cleveland, OH
10	New York Eye & Ear Infirmary, NY
11	Barnes-Jewish Hospital /Wash U

CONGRATULATIONS,  
DR. WEE!

RCH'S NEWEST  
ADDITION TO THE  
BEST DOCTOR'S  
IN HAWAII LIST  
FOR 2013

DR. KOKAME: BEST DOCTOR  
SINCE 1998

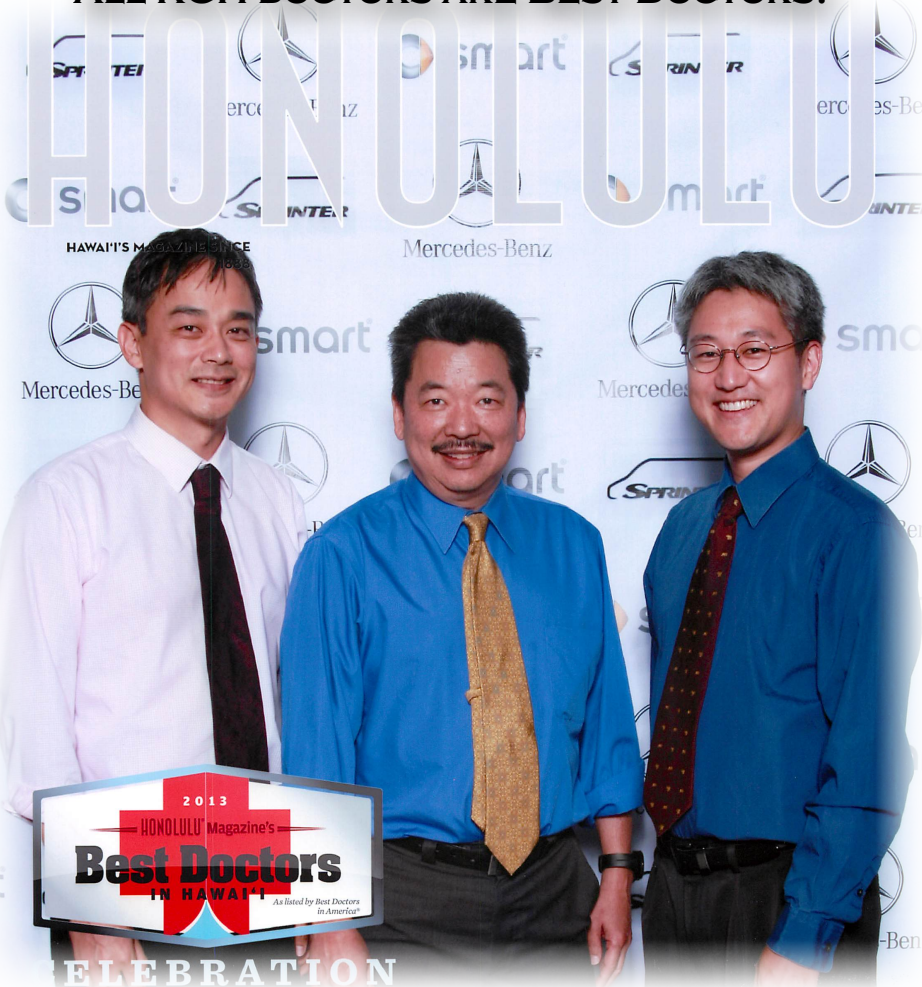
DR. LAI: BEST DOCTOR  
SINCE 2007



## MEET DR. WEE

Dr. Raymond Wee trained at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary at Harvard for his ophthalmology training, which is one of the best academic ophthalmology departments in the world. Dr. Wee distinguished himself there by becoming the Director of the Ocular Trauma Service and Chief Resident for the program. Dr. Wee was also an instructor at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Wee trained at the Barnes Retina Institute at the Washington University School of Medicine in Saint Louis, one of the leading retina training programs in the USA, and where pioneering vitreoretinal surgical ideas were developed by the retinal surgeons there.

ALL RCH DOCTORS ARE BEST DOCTORS!



## Dr. Wee was a Featured Speaker at PCOOS 2013

Founded in 1906, PCOOS is one of the oldest medical societies in the western United States. Dr. Wee had the honor of being a Featured Speaker at the 97th Annual Meeting, he spoke about PCV and the exciting research that is being performed at our center on this disease. He also spoke about how the eyes influence circadian rhythms. His family enjoyed attending the meeting with him on Maui.

# DIABETIC RETINOPATHY



*Above: Simulation of vision after damage due to diabetes*

## **Some steps you can take to avoid diabetic related eye problems and manage your diabetes:**

- Control your Hemoglobin A1C levels
- Follow your nutritional program
  - Eat regular and balanced small meals
  - Avoid refined carbohydrates (high glycemic foods)
- Exercise and manage your weight
- Take your medication
- Don't drink and smoke
- Manage your stress
- Manage your blood pressure
- Check your Amsler Grid every few months
- Get regular check-ups with your eye doctor

Diabetic retinopathy is a general term for all disorders of the retina caused by diabetes. Diabetes is a chronic (lifelong) disease in which high-levels of sugar in the blood lead to problematic side-effects throughout the whole body. The retina is the layer of tissue at the back of the inner eye. It changes light and images that enter the eye into nerve signals that are sent to the brain. Diabetic retinopathy is caused by damage to blood vessels of the retina. The damaged blood vessels can leak blood and fluid, causing swelling and blurred vision, severe vision loss and sometimes blindness. Diabetic retinopathy is the leading cause of blindness in working-age Americans.

Huge strides have been made in the treatment of diabetic retinopathy and if you do develop a major problem, there are treatments that often work well if you begin them right away. The earlier problems are diagnosed, the more successful the treatments can be. People who keep their blood sugar levels closer to normal are less likely to have retinopathy or to have milder forms.

The longer you have had diabetes and the more poorly controlled it is the greater your chance of developing diabetic retinopathy.

Most often, diabetic retinopathy has no symptoms until the damage to your eyes is severe. Many people with early diabetic retinopathy have no symptoms before major bleeding occurs in the eye. This is why everyone with diabetes should have regular eye exams.

## *Some statistics from the American Diabetes Association:*

- In 2005-2008, 28.5% of people with diabetes have some form of diabetic retinopathy and about 4.4% of diabetics have diabetic

retinopathy that's so advanced that it may affect their ability to see.

- In 2011, 25.8 million children & adults (8.3% of the population) have diabetes, 18.8 million of those have been diagnosed, and 7 million are undiagnosed.

## **CALL YOUR EYE DOCTOR IS ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS ARE NEW OR ARE BECOMING WORSE:**

- You cannot see well in dim light
- You have blind spots
- You have double vision (you see two things when there is only one)
- Your vision is hazy or blurry and you cannot focus
- You have pain in one of your eyes
- You are having headaches.
- You see spots floating in your eyes
- You cannot see things on the side of your field of vision

*Pali Momi has a Diabetes Self-Management Education Program. The 10-hour program includes an individual diabetes assessment followed by a series of four classes. Pali Momi also offers free glucose screening and Diabetic Support Groups. Call 535-7733 to register for the education program or for information on other services.*

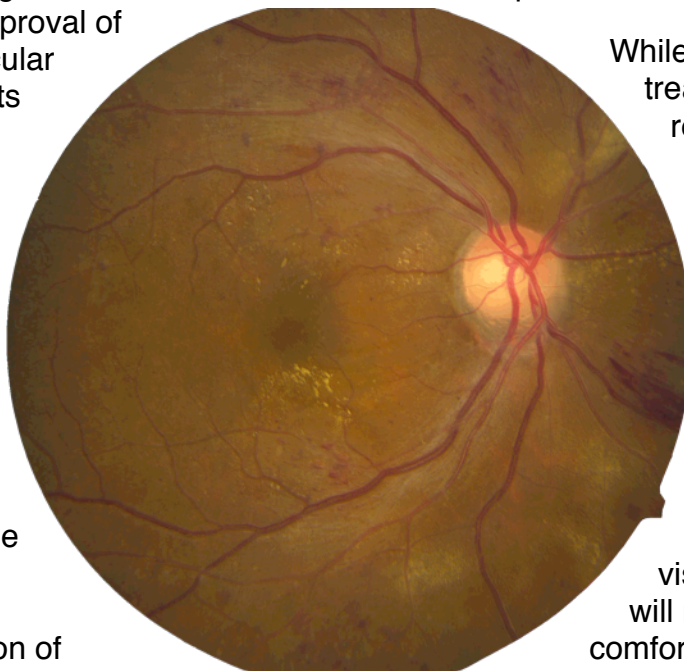
# Longer Lasting Medications

## The Next Chapter for Treatment of Retinal Disease

Retina Consultants of Hawaii (RCH) has always strived to bring the most advanced treatments for retinal disease to Hawaii through its research program and innovative surgeons. RCH was the only site in Hawaii conducting clinical trials that lead to the FDA approval of Lucentis for age-related macular degeneration and our patients were receiving treatment 3 years before its approval in 2006. Many of the patients in our trials maintain good vision today.

In August of 2012 Lucentis was approved for treatment of diabetic macular edema (DME). DME is swelling of the macula, the central part of the retina responsible for sharp, central vision. Lucentis was shown to slow the progression of DME when compared with sham injections. Not only did Lucentis help prevent progression of DME

but even caused most patients to improve. The study was presented at the recent American Academy of Ophthalmology meeting in Chicago. RCH is currently offering this treatment to our patients.



*The retina of an eye that is showing changes due to diabetes.*

While these advancements in the treatment of retinal disease have revolutionized ophthalmology, they still require frequent treatment involving intraocular injections (every 4 to 6 weeks). RCH is now involved with research to further advance this treatment. The focus for new clinical trials is to develop treatments that last longer (up to four times longer) requiring less frequent visits to the doctor's office. This will make treatment more comfortable to the patient and reduce the chance of unexpected complications that can result from intraocular injections.

### Enrolling Clinical Trials at Hawaii Macula and Retina Institute:

*Dry AMD: ACUCELA Study* - A study investigating the effectiveness of a once-a-day, oral-medication, in slowing down the degenerative effects of dry macular degeneration. Transportation support provided, if needed, to patients residing on all islands of Hawaii.

*Wet-AMD: REACH Study* - A potentially longer lasting medication for cases of Wet-AMD that have not been previously treated.

*Wet-AMD: LPATH Study* - An adjunctive treatment, isoNEP, for cases of wet-AMD that are not responding well to current FDA approved medications

*PCV: EPIC Study* - Eylea for Polypoidal Choroidal Vasculopathy, a type of wet-AMD. A study investigating the effectiveness of monthly or bi-monthly injections of the FDA approved medication, Eylea in patients that have previously and have not previously received treatment.

Please call Jacqueline Suiter (808) 380-8060 or Joel Nicholus (808) 380-8059 for more information regarding these trials