



California Academy of Eye Physicians & Surgeons

1201 J Street, Suite 200, Sacramento, CA 95814 o Phone: (916) 529-8795 o Fax: (415) 777-1082
Accounting and Correspondence: 425 Market St., Suite 2275, San Francisco, CA 94105 o Phone: (415) 777-3937
e-mail: CaEyeMDs@aol.com o web: www.californiaeyemds.org

BOARD OF TRUSTEES (2007)

President

Howard R. Krauss, MD*

President-Elect

Ronald L. Morton, MD, FACS *

Immediate Past President

Jonathan I. Macy, MD*

Vice President --

Advocacy and Program

James B. Ruben, MD*

Vice President --

Finance and Administration

Frank A. Scotti, MD*

Trustees

Barbara J. Arnold, MD, Sacramento
Ronald N. Gaster, MD, Irvine
Janet K. Hartzler, MD, Rancho Mirage
Thomas P. Kidwell, MD, Rancho Cordova
Donald Y. Lesser, MD, JD, San Jose
Shan C. Lin, MD, San Francisco
Mark J. Mannis, MD, Sacramento
George M. Rajacich, MD, Los Angeles
Diana R. Shiba, MD, San Diego
Paul T. Urrea, MD, Los Angeles

Executive Vice President

Craig H. Kliger, MD*

*Executive Committee

AFFILIATE

MDEyePAC of California

Alfred C. Marrone, MD, Chair
Leland Rosenblum, MD, Vice-Chair

REPRESENTATIVES

CMA Delegates

Craig H. Kliger, MD
Robert Penner, MD
Andrew F. Calman, MD, PhD*

AAO Councilors

Barbara J. Arnold, MD*
Andrew F. Calman, MD, PhD
David A. Edwards, MD*
Robert A. Hardy, MD
Craig H. Kliger, MD*
Jonathan I. Macy, MD*
Alfred C. Marrone, MD
Robert Penner, MD

*Alternate

Press Statement

For Immediate Release

October 25, 2007

Contact: Media Relations

(415) 637-6126

Email: CaEyeMDs@aol.com

California Eye Physicians and Surgeons Seek Reversal of Limitation on Access to Avastin

Genentech's Decision to Stop Selling Drug to Compounding Pharmacies May Not Be in the Interest of Patients

SAN FRANCISCO--The California Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (CAEPS) believes that Genentech's recent decision to halt sales of Avastin® (bevacizumab) to compounding pharmacies effective November 30, 2007 could have a negative impact on the care of patients with age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and other conditions with potentially blinding complications.

"We understand [Genentech's] need to provide a reasonable return to [its] shareholders. However, we believe that need must be balanced by the needs of society, particularly patient access to appropriate off-label uses of medications based on an individual physician's well-established ability to weigh the risks, benefits, and available evidence of a specific use as part of the 'practice of medicine,'" said Howard R. Krauss, MD, CAEPS President, in a letter to Arthur D. Levinson, PhD, Genentech Inc.'s Chairman and Chief Executive Officer.

Both Avastin and the FDA-approved Lucentis® (ranibizumab injection), a similar drug sold by Genentech, share a similar method of action by inhibiting blood vessel growth. However, Lucentis was designed and tested specifically for treatment of "wet" AMD, while Avastin has only been approved for the treatment of various cancers. Prior to Lucentis' approval, many eye physicians had been using Avastin to treat not only "wet" AMD, but also diabetic retinopathy, macular edema, neovascular glaucoma and other vision-threatening disorders.

CAEPS has introduced an Emergency Resolution to be considered by the House of Delegates of the California Medical Association (CMA) be held in Anaheim later this week (October 26-29) calling for the CMA, and possibly the American

Medical Association, to join in opposition to this move on the part of Genentech.

In part, the Resolution argues “Off-label successes with Avastin and the huge price differential between the medications (Lucentis is approximately \$2000/dose, Avastin \$40/dose [WSJ, 10/12/07]) have led many ophthalmologists to consider Avastin for all uses, but particularly those where neither treatment is FDA-approved.”

According to Genentech, Avastin will continue to be made available directly to physicians and hospital pharmacies. However, because only a small fraction of the cancer-treatment dose is needed for each patient (a single vial can provide up to 100 doses for eye treatments) it is preferable for an ophthalmologist to use a compounding pharmacy to divide the vial of medication into smaller doses to minimize waste and the potential for contamination.

About Age-Related Macular Degeneration

(Information Provided by the American Academy of Ophthalmology)

Macular degeneration is the deterioration or breakdown of the central portion of the macula or retina, which destroys central vision, making reading, driving and recognizing faces difficult. There are two general types of age-related macular degeneration (AMD): dry and wet. Dry AMD is more common, but wet AMD progresses more quickly and accounts for about 90 percent of the severe vision loss associated with this disease.

Dry AMD occurs when the layer of cells beneath the retina begins to deteriorate, which affects the light-sensitive photoreceptor cells of the central retina. Wet AMD occurs when abnormal blood vessels begin to grow under the macula. These new blood vessels leak fluid or blood, causing central vision to blur or be lost. There is no cure for AMD.

Currently more than 1.75 million people in the United States have AMD and **7 million more people have earlier stages of the disease.**

For more information on AMD, visit www.EyeCareAmerica.org

About the California Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons

The California Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons is the state's only association of eye physicians and surgeons — Eye MDs (ophthalmologists). Eye-related care is provided by the three “O’s” — ophthalmologists, optometrists, and opticians. It is the *ophthalmologist*, or Eye MD, who can treat it all: eye diseases and injuries, and perform eye surgery. CAEPS joins the AAO in urging all patients, particularly those over the age of 50, to get regular eye exams by an ophthalmologist to screen for AMD and other eye disorders. Visit the CAEPS’ Website at www.CaliforniaEyeMDs.org