

Tulane ophthalmologist specializes in glaucoma treatments and research

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Board-certified in Ophthalmology, Dr. Zhang specializes in the medical and surgical management of glaucoma, including minimally invasive glaucoma procedures as well as traditional filtering procedures. (Photo by Cheryl Gerber)

Dr. Ze Zhang says that helping a patient see again is one of the best parts of her job; and the research she does when she's not treating patients makes her one of the most skilled ophthalmologists in the Gulf South.

Zhang, assistant professor and director of Tulane University School of Medicine's ophthalmology residency program, is part of a team of fellowship-trained and board-certified glaucoma specialists in the Tulane Ophthalmology Department. The physicians have years of experience in both medical laser and surgical treatment, and the Tulane clinic offers some of the most state-of-the-art glaucoma treatments that are both minimally invasive and have great efficacy.

"There's a variety of different treatment modalities available ranging from eyedrops to pills, to laser procedures to surgeries," Zhang said. "It really depends on how severe someone's glaucoma is. The good thing is we now have a myriad of treatment options, and no one should

go blind anymore with a timely diagnosis and proper treatment.”

Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness for people over the age of 60, and those who are Black, Asian or Hispanic have a greater risk of developing the condition. Many people can be asymptomatic until the eye condition causes permanent vision loss, so Zhang says it's very important to talk to your doctor about any risk factors or family history of glaucoma.

Zhang is also the Tulane Faculty Physician-Scientist Pipeline Program (PSPP) Scholar and spends part of her time researching the eye conditions she also treats. Her clinical research focuses on comparing the efficacy and safety of various glaucoma surgeries and medications. Her research also looks at slow-release medications, which could be beneficial for patients dealing with glaucoma and other serious eye conditions, and her goal is to leverage this new knowledge and help develop more targeted and individualized treatment plans for patients.

Zhang says the patients she treats inspire her research: “It's the patients that are the rare cases, the difficult to treat patients that really trigger the light in my head about what kind of research we need to do,” Zhang said. “Those are the patients who need the help the most.”

To see Dr. Ze Zhang or one of the other skilled ophthalmologists at Tulane, call 504-988-5831.