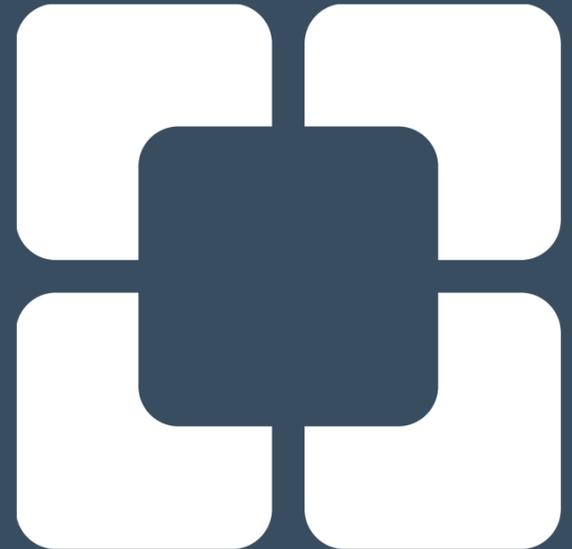


PEARLS IN NEURO-OPHTHALMOLOGY

Amy S. Babiuch, MD
Cole Eye Institute
Cleveland Clinic



Financial Disclosures

- Genentech: Advisor & Research





WHAT WILL YOUR
MEDAL COUNT BE...

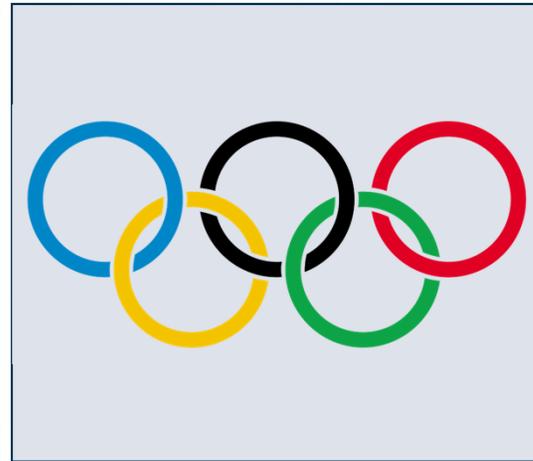
GIANT SLALOM



FIGURE SKATING



PAIRS SKATING



ICE HOCKEY



SPEED SKATING



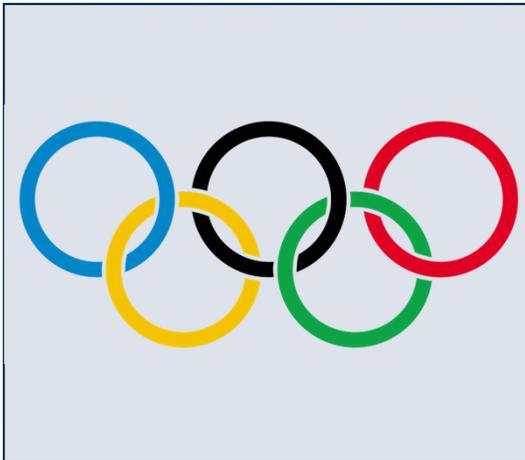
GIANT CELL ARTERITIS



UNILATERAL DISC EDEMA



BILATERAL DISC EDEMA



HEADACHE



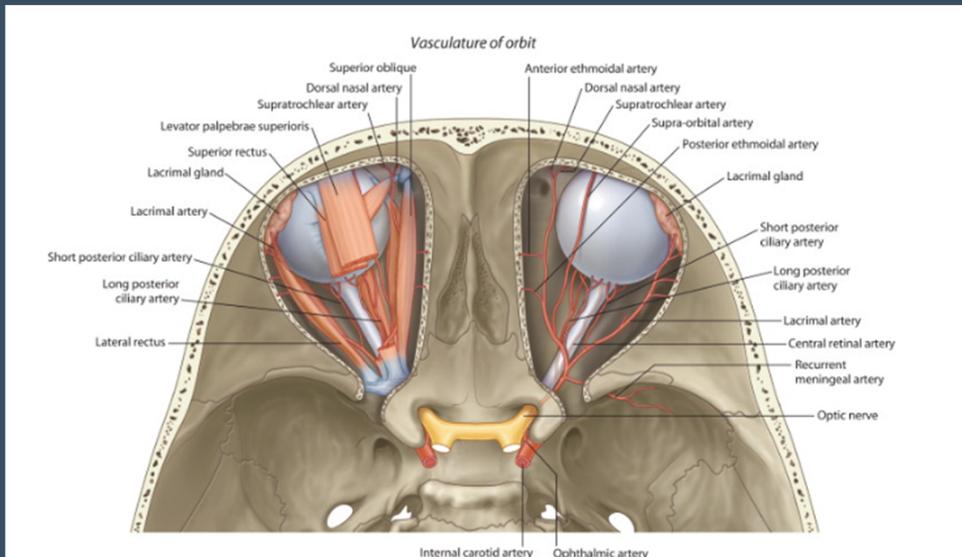
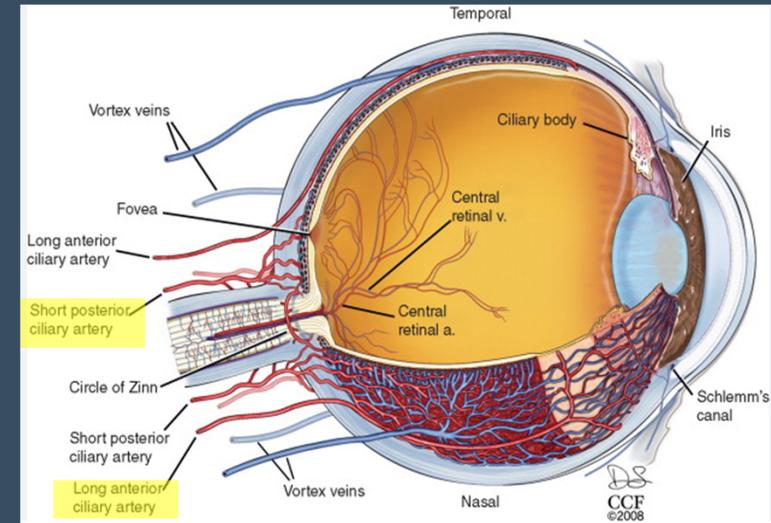
CRANIAL NEUROPATHIES

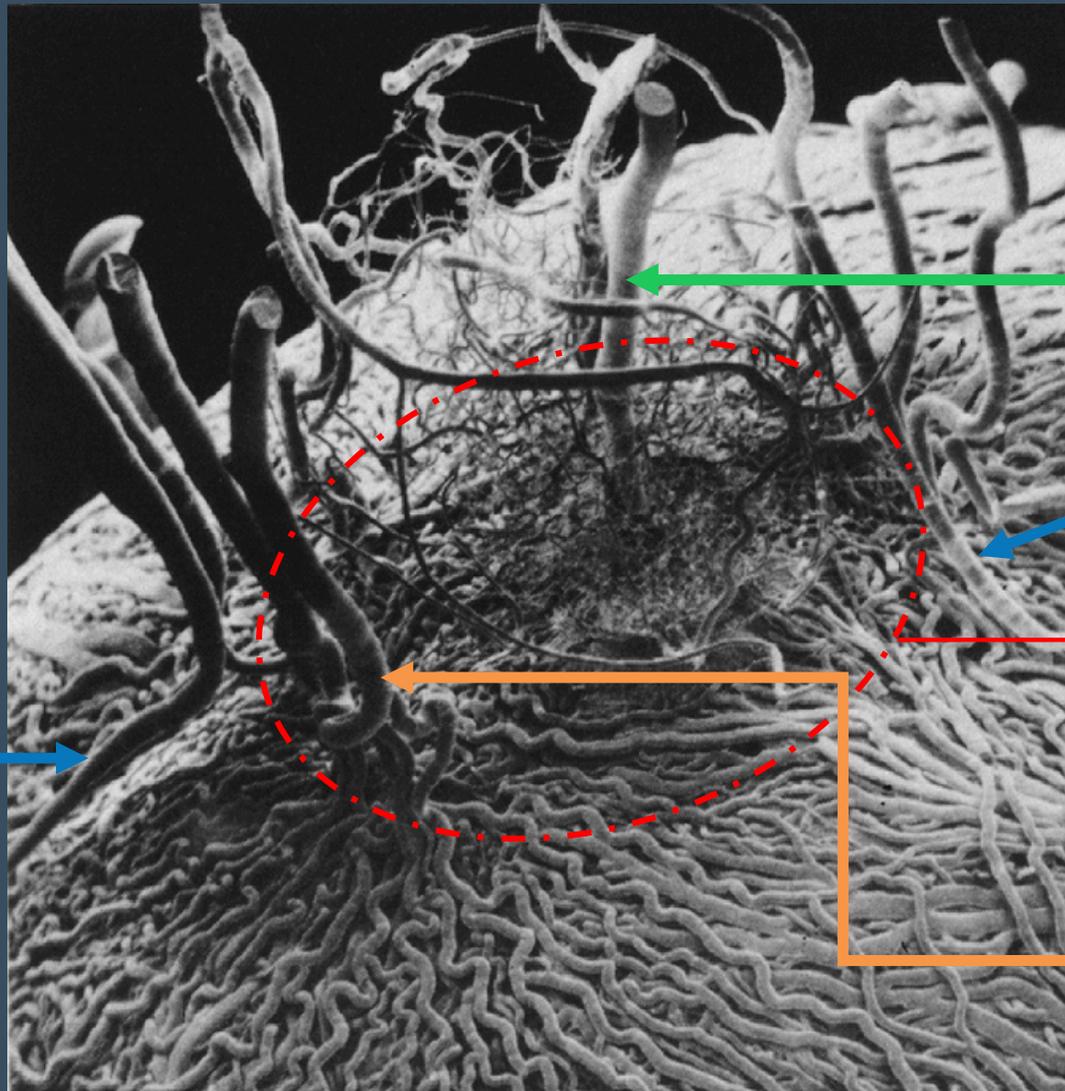




EVENT 1: GCA

- GCA has a predilection for:
 - Superficial temporal artery
 - Ophthalmic artery
 - Posterior ciliary arteries
 - Vertebral arteries





Central Retinal Artery

Long Posterior Ciliary Artery

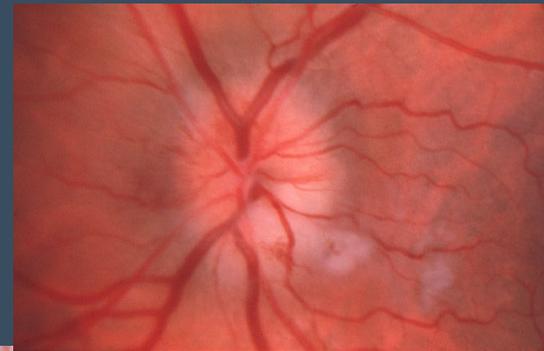
Annulus of Zinn-Haller

Short Posterior Ciliary Artery

Long Posterior Ciliary Artery

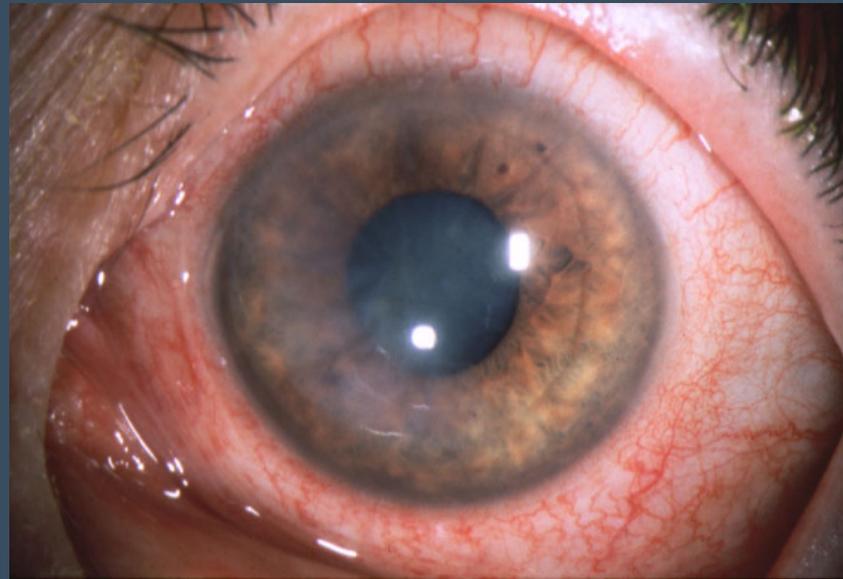
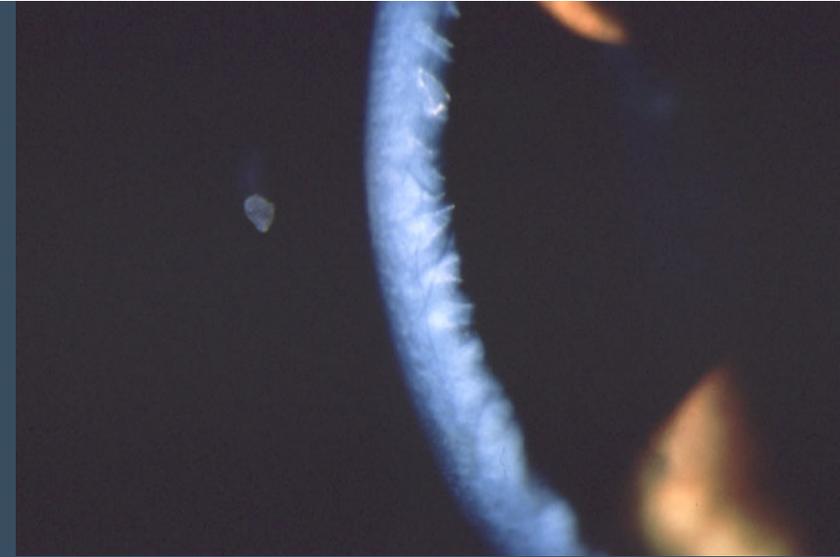
Ophthalmic *Symptoms* of GCA

- Transient Vision Loss
 - Preceded by amaurosis x 7-10 days in 30%
- Diplopia (double vision)
 - May involve multiple muscles
 - May involve the pupil
- Red painful eye
 - Often accompanied by blurry vision



Anterior Segment Ischemia

- Hyperemic conjunctiva and sclera
- Cloudy cornea
 - +/- edema
 - +/- folds
- Hypotony (low intraocular pressure)
- AC reaction



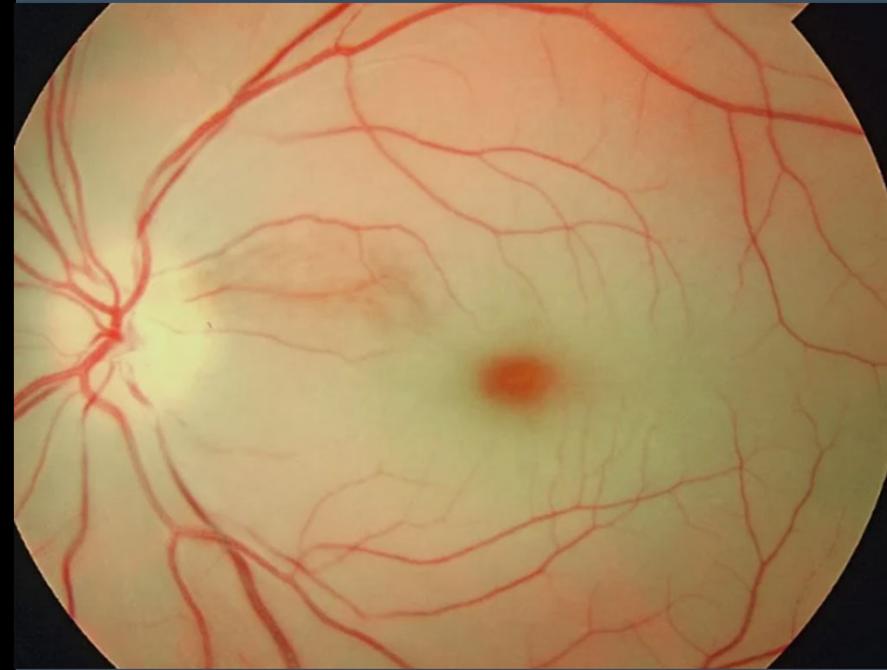
Posterior Ischemia (Retina, Choroid, Optic Nerve)

- Disc edema, disc pallor
- Retinal whitening, box-carring of arterioles
- Cotton wool spots
- Retinal hemorrhages
- Patchy choroidal filling on FA and ICG
- PAMM (paracentral acute middle maculopathy) on OCT
 - Retinal hyperreflectivity on OCT
 - Thinning of inner retina and ganglion cell layer on OCT

Posterior Ischemia: Retinal Artery Occlusion



Retinal
Whitening



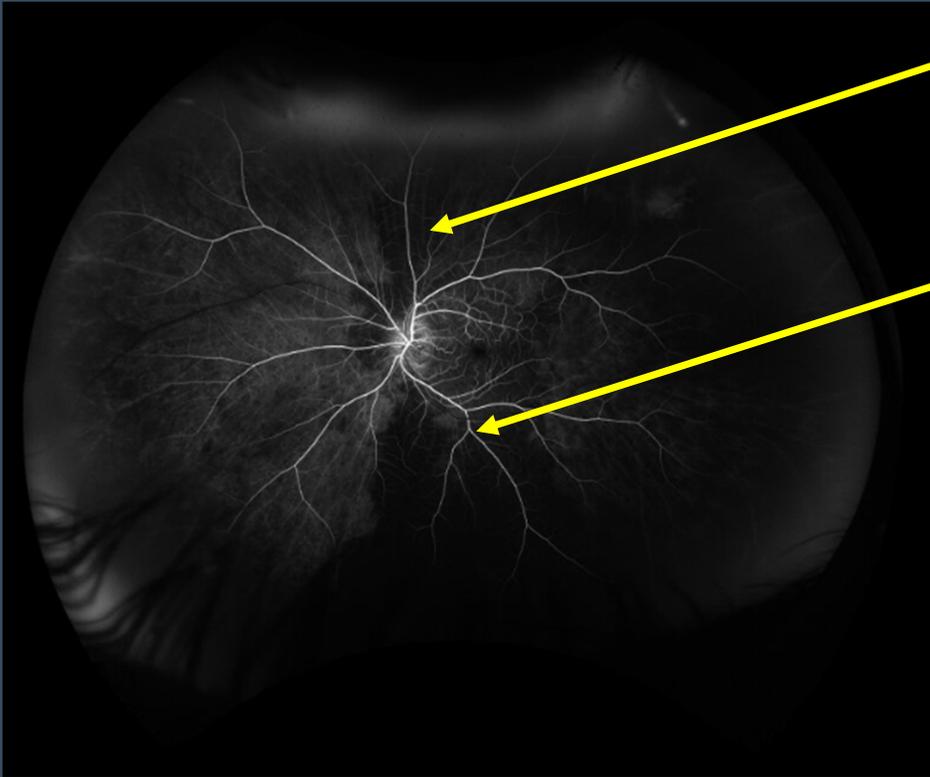
Cherry Red Spot

Posterior Ischemia: Optic Nerve

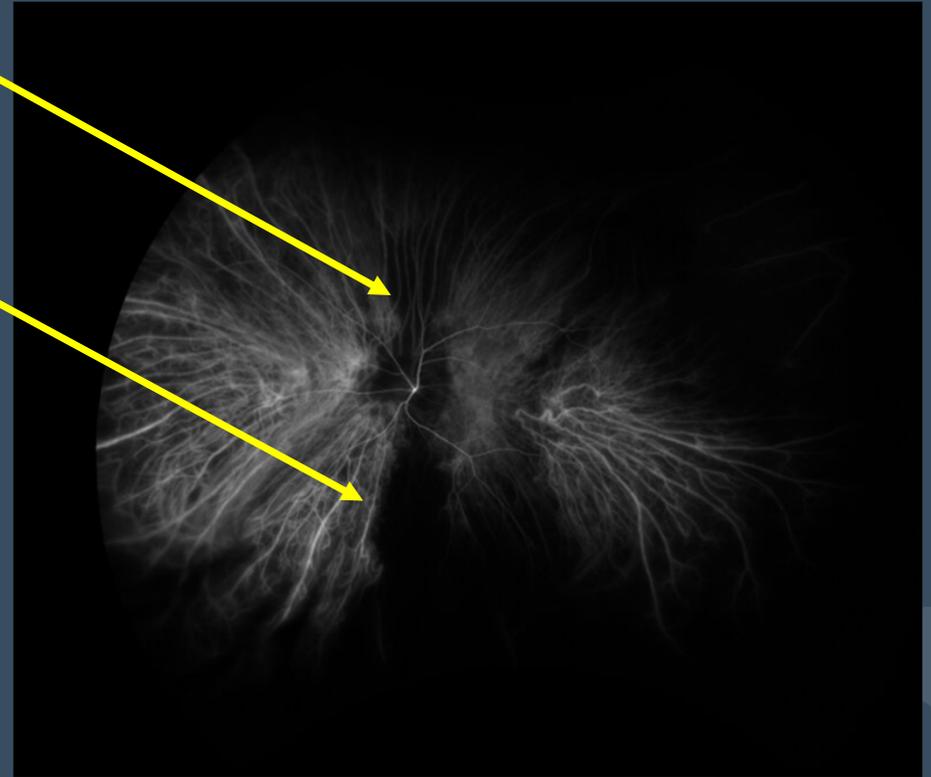


- Cotton Wool Spots
- Hemorrhages
- Pallid Edema

Posterior Ischemia: Choroidal Ischemia



Fluorescein
Angiography



Indocyanine Green
Angiography

16s

19s

23s

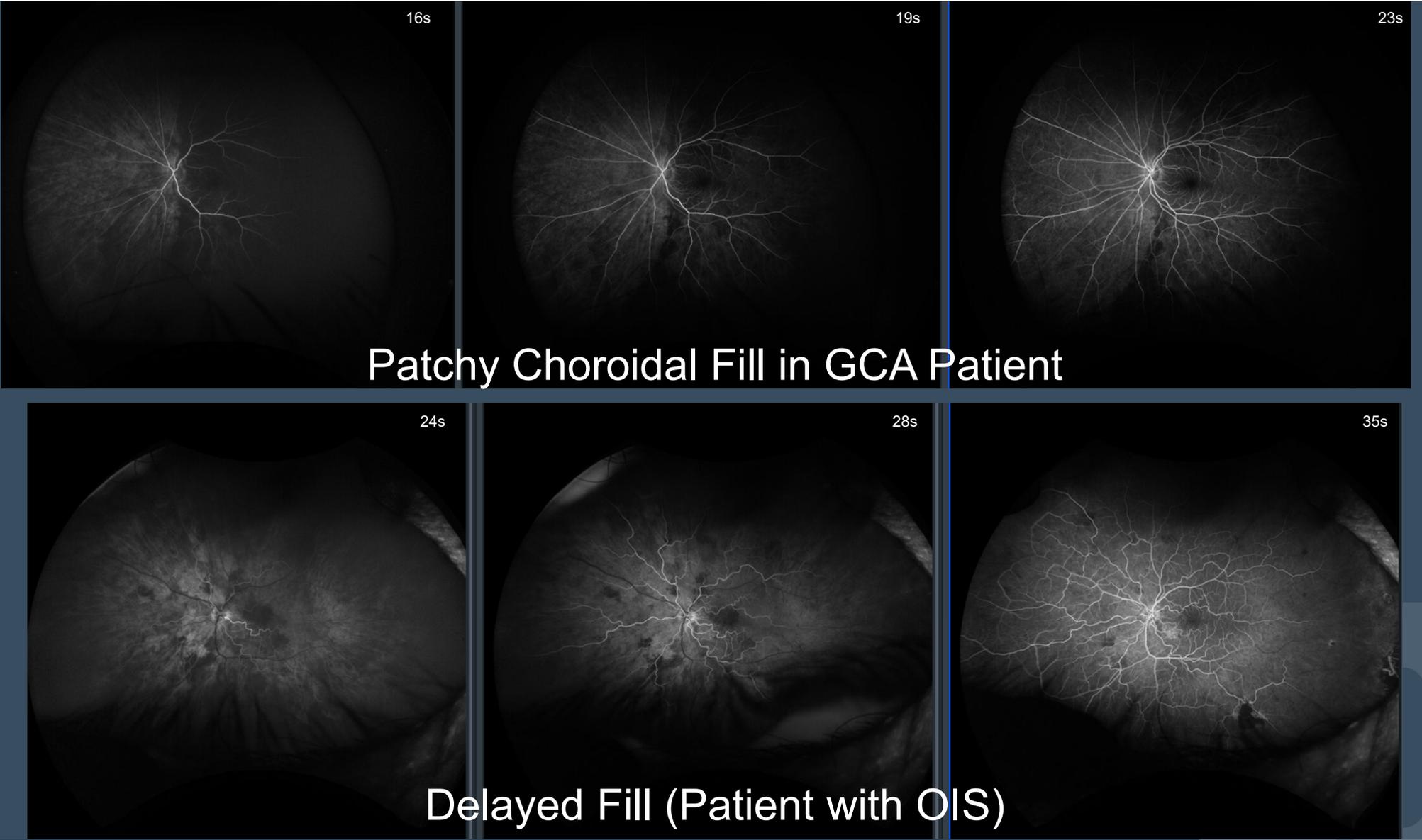
Patchy Choroidal Fill in GCA Patient

24s

28s

35s

Delayed Fill (Patient with OIS)



Ophthalmic *Diagnoses* of GCA

- Optic Nerve
 - Amaurosis Fugax, AION, PION
- Retina
 - CRAO, BRAO, cilioretinal artery occlusion, CWS
- Anterior Segment
 - Pupil abnormalities, conjunctival and scleral injection, intraocular pressure abnormalities
- Extraocular Muscle (EOM)
 - EOM ischemia, CN palsies
- Ocular Ischemic syndrome
- Orbital Inflammatory Syndrome
- Visual field defects
 - Chiasm involvement; Cerebral Ischemic Lesions; Optic tract involvement

Ophthalmic *Findings* in GCA

- Cranial Neuropathies
 - Extraocular motility abnormalities
 - Can involve >1 CN (3,4,6)
 - CN II = Optic Nerve
 - Retrobulbar involvement
 - Chiasmal involvement
 - Optic tract involvement

Ophthalmic *Findings* in GCA

OVER 50 YO WITH ANY
OF THESE →

CRP

CBC

ESR

Clinical Utility of ESR,CRP & Platelets

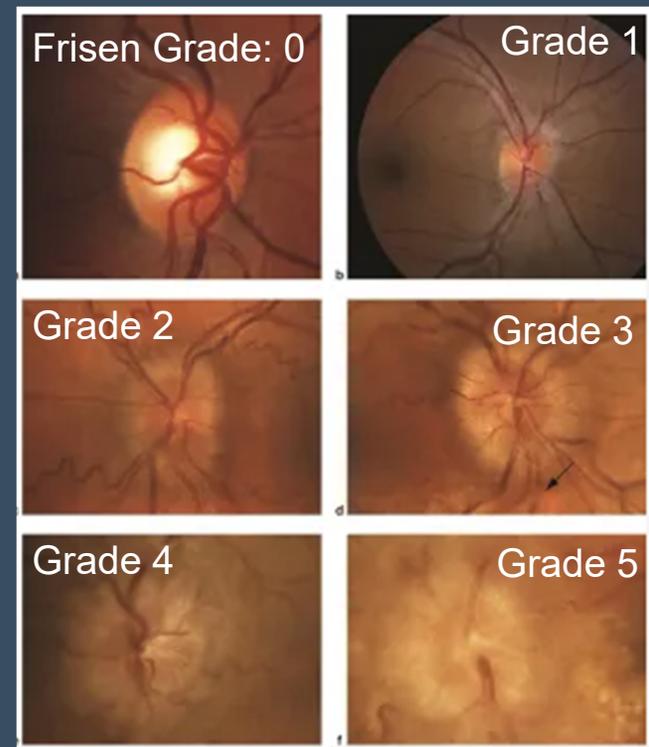
- 3001 patients underwent TABx
- 459 +ve cases
- Elevated values:
 - CRP>2.45
 - ESR>50
 - Platelets>400
- If all 3 were elevated then 8x greater odds of GCA
- CRP & Platelets have a greater predictive value than ESR alone



HOW DID WE DO...



Image adapted from: https://www.aol.com/articles/olympic-gold-medal-really-worth-130000637.html?utm_source=spotim&utm_medium=spotim_recirculation&spot_im_comment_id=sp_ljnMf2Jd_23501346_c_4CW0IC&spot_im_highlight_immediate=true. Accessed Feb 2026



EVENT 2: UNILATERAL DISC EDEMA

AI Image generated by Gemini 3, Google, Feb 2026.

Image Adapted from: <https://www.aao.org/education/image/frisen-grades-3>. Accessed Feb 2026

Case 1: Unilateral Disc Edema

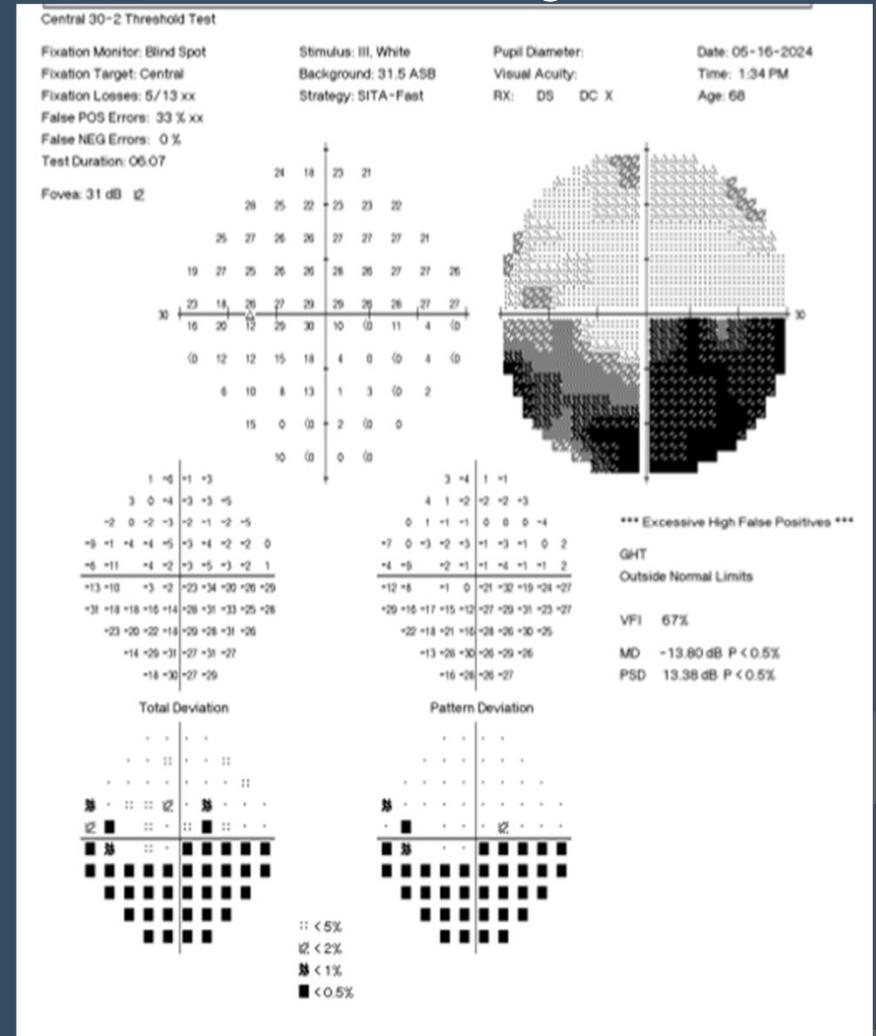
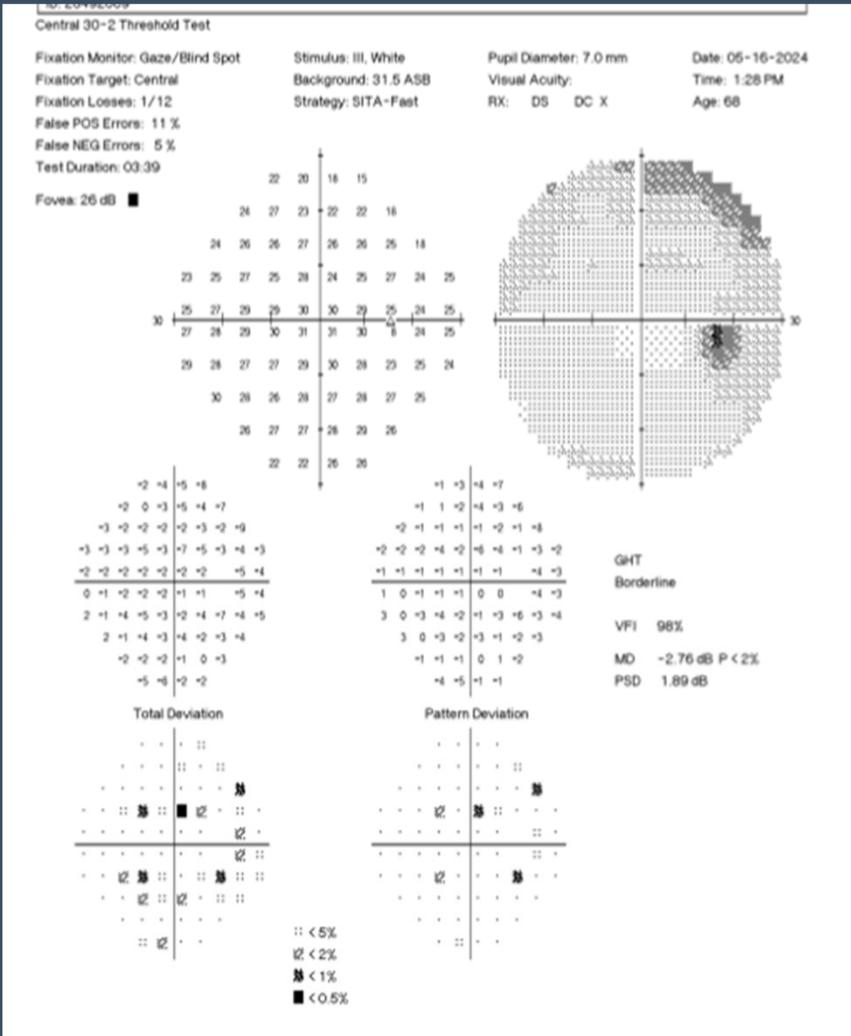
- HPI:5/16/2024
 - 68yo WM presents after awakening with blurry vision in his lower left eye that started about 10 days prior to presentation

PMH:	Medications:	Ocular Hx:	Baseline Exam:	
spastic gait Prediabetes Parkinsonism	Carbidopa-levodopa ASA 81mg Vitamin B-12 fluoxetine	none	VA	
			OD 20/30-	OS 20/30-
			IOP	
			OD 16	OS 15
			Pupils	
			OD PERRL; No RAPD	OS PERRL; No RAPD

- Normal Anterior SLE

Right Eye

Left Eye

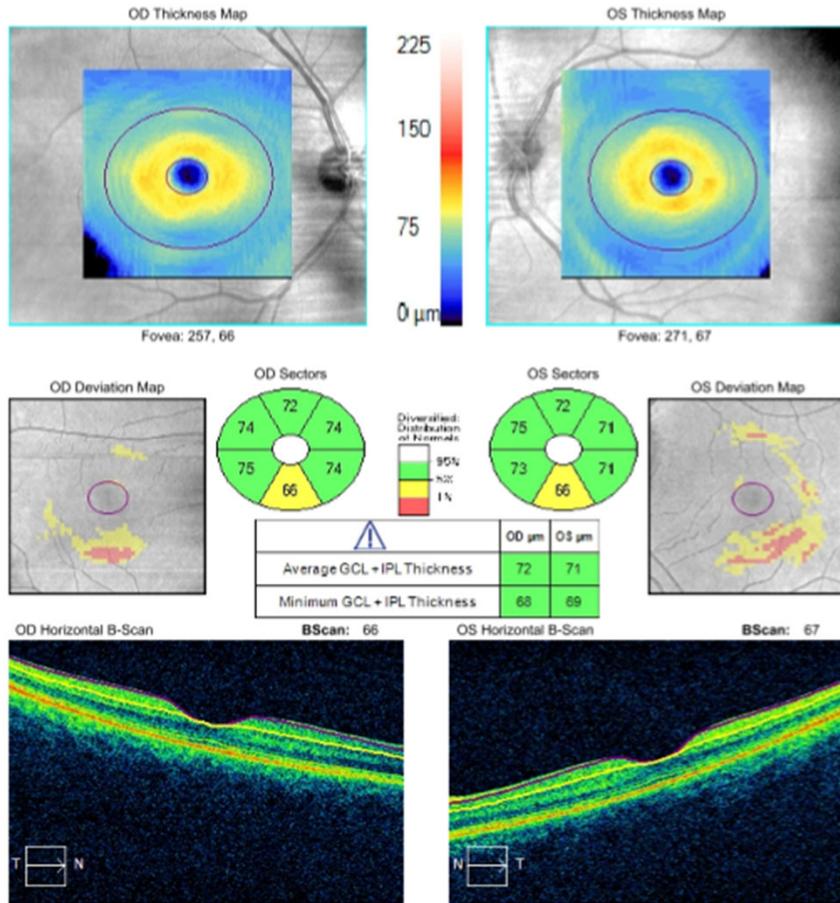


GCL

RNFL

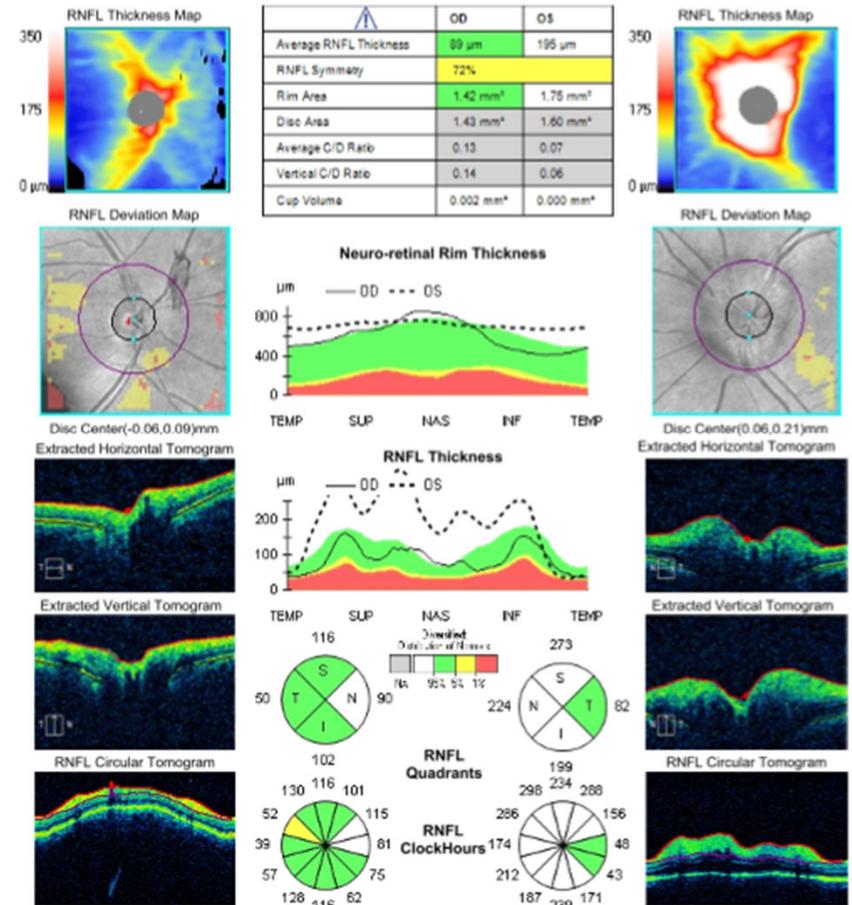
Ganglion Cell OU Analysis: Macular Cube 512x128

OD ● ● OS



ONH and RNFL OU Analysis: Optic Disc Cube 200x200

OD ● ● OS



Initial Work-up

- A1c; CBC; CRP; ESR: normal
- Carotid US: 20-39% stenosis in R&L ICA
- MRI Brain WWO: normal

Typical NAION

- Disc edema resolves within 6-8 weeks
- Altitudinal defect
- 15% risk of developing in fellow eye in 5 years
- Avoid BP meds at night; manage systemic disease
- PDE5 Inhibitors
- GLP-1 association still unclear

Case 2: Unilateral Disc Edema

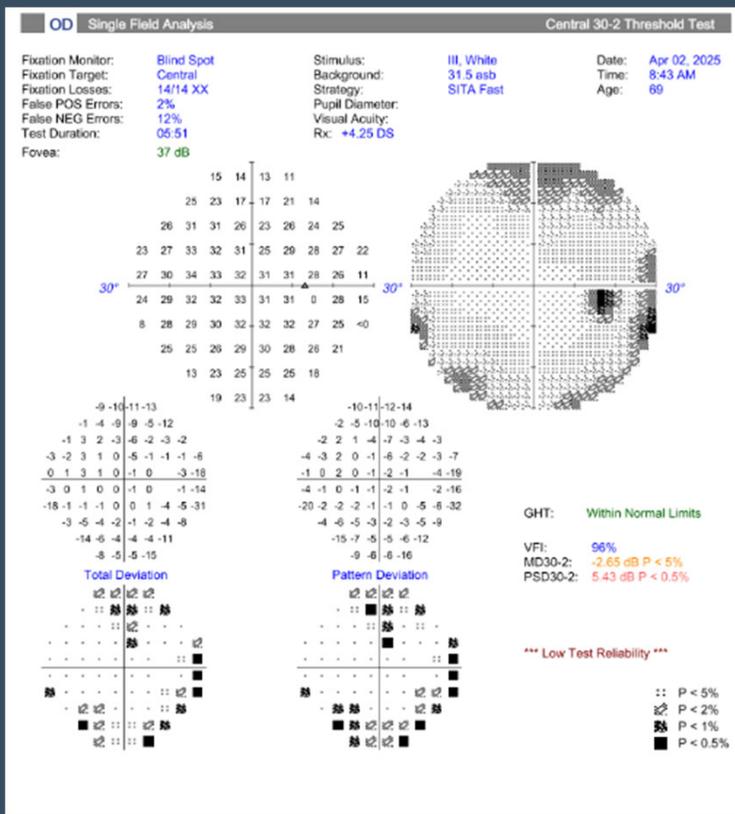
- 4/1/2025: 69 yo WF presents with 2-3 weeks of smudge in her left eye peripheral vision

PMH:	Medications:	Ocular Hx:	Baseline Exam:	
HTN OSA Grave's Dz	Pregabalin Losartan Bupropion Meloxicam Propranolol	none	VA	
			OD 20/20-	OS 20/40-
			IOP	
			OD 16	OS 15
			Pupils	
			OD PERRL; No RAPD	OS PERRL; +APD

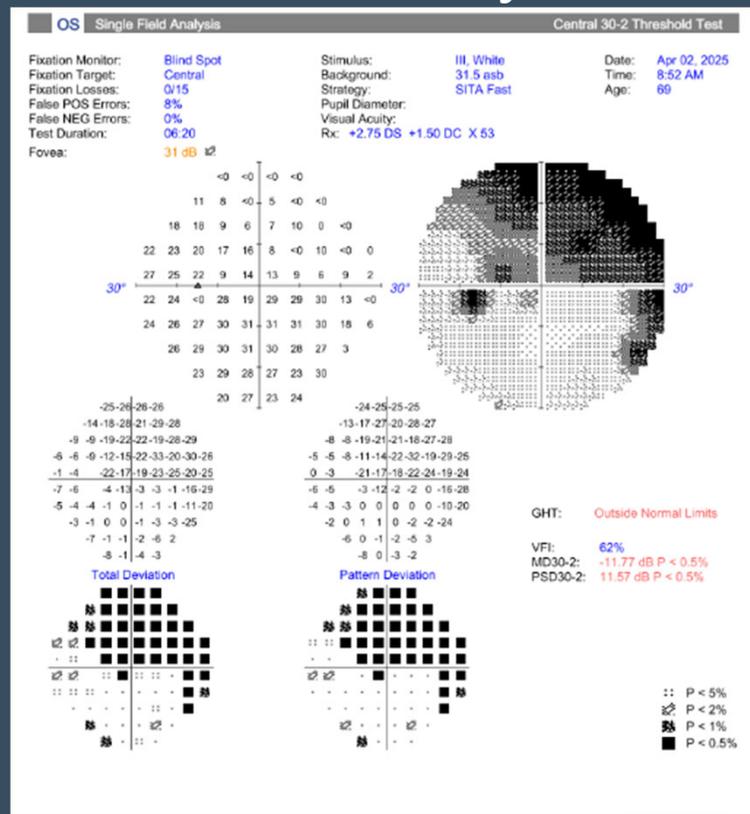
- Normal Anterior SLE

HVF 4/2/2025

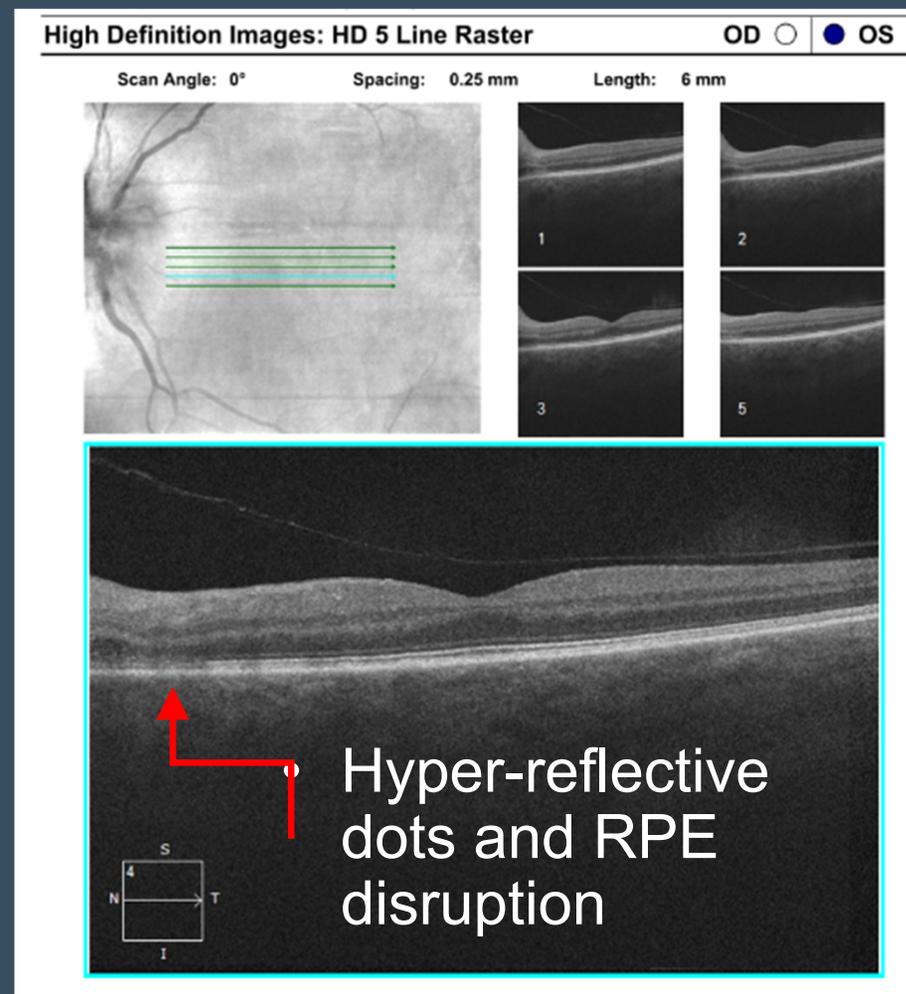
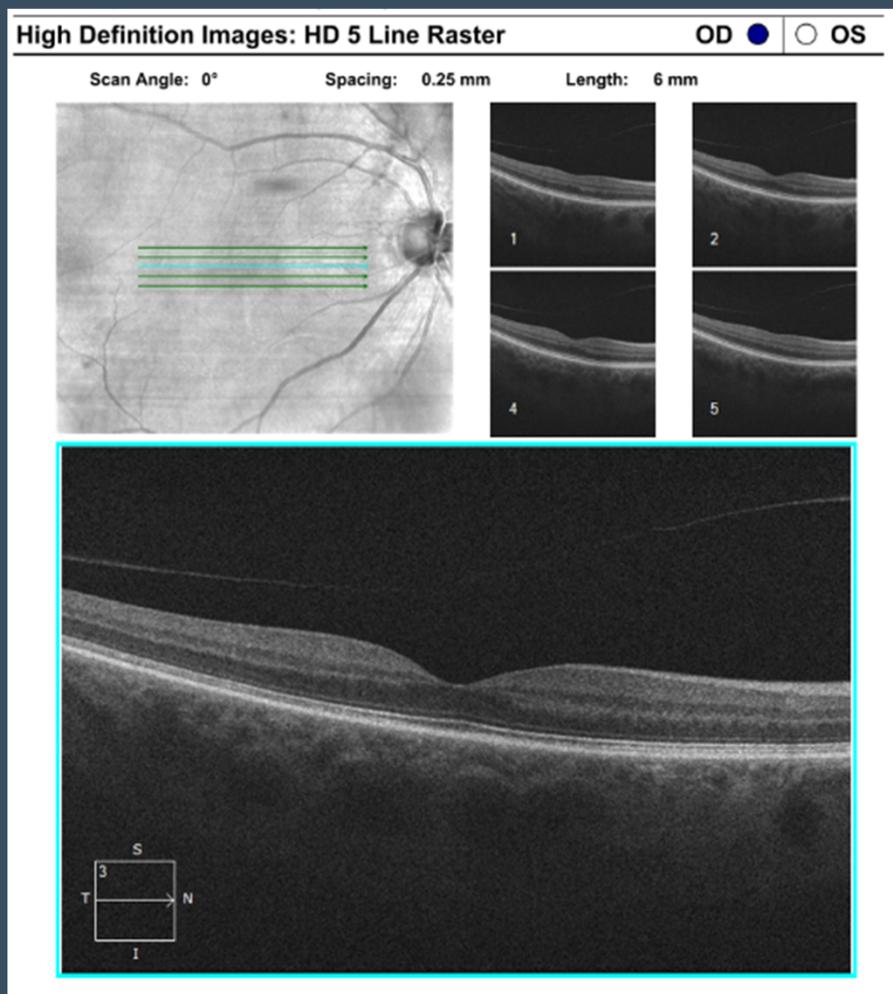
Right Eye

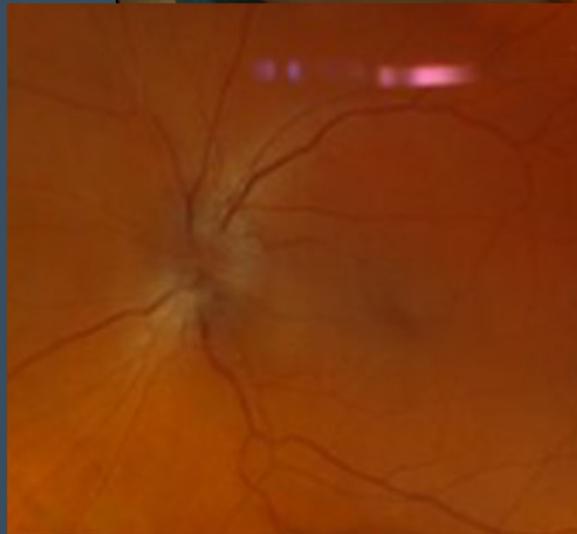
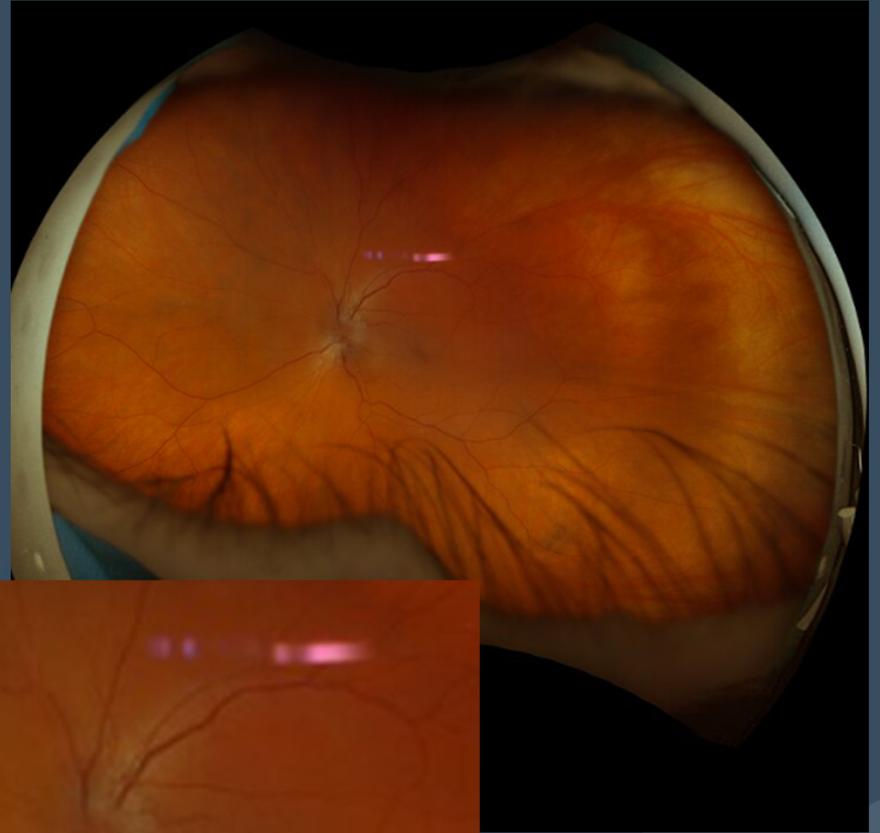
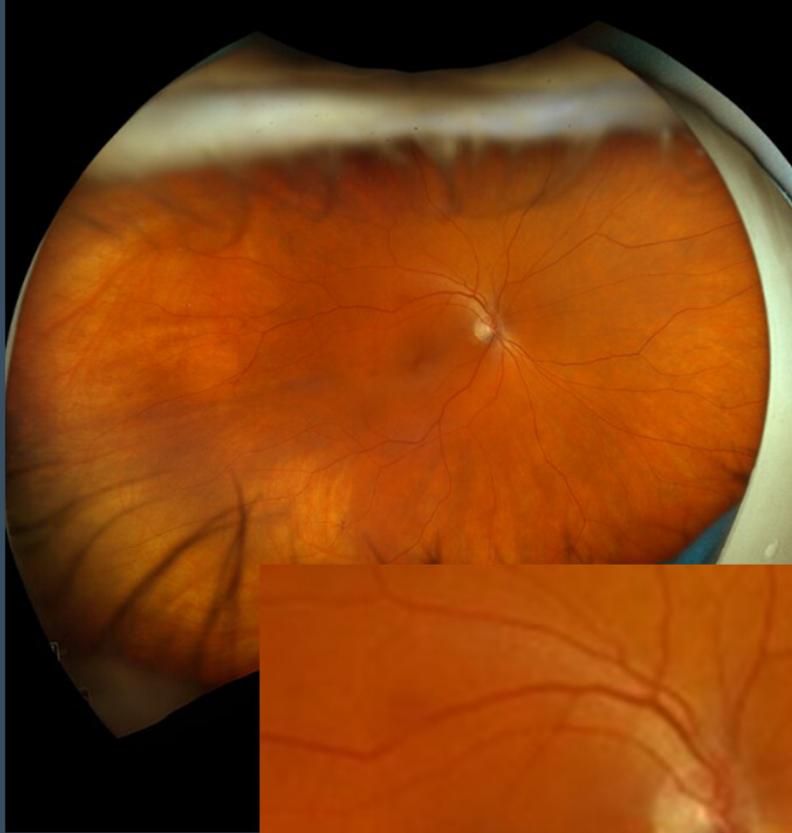


Left Eye



Mac OCT OU:

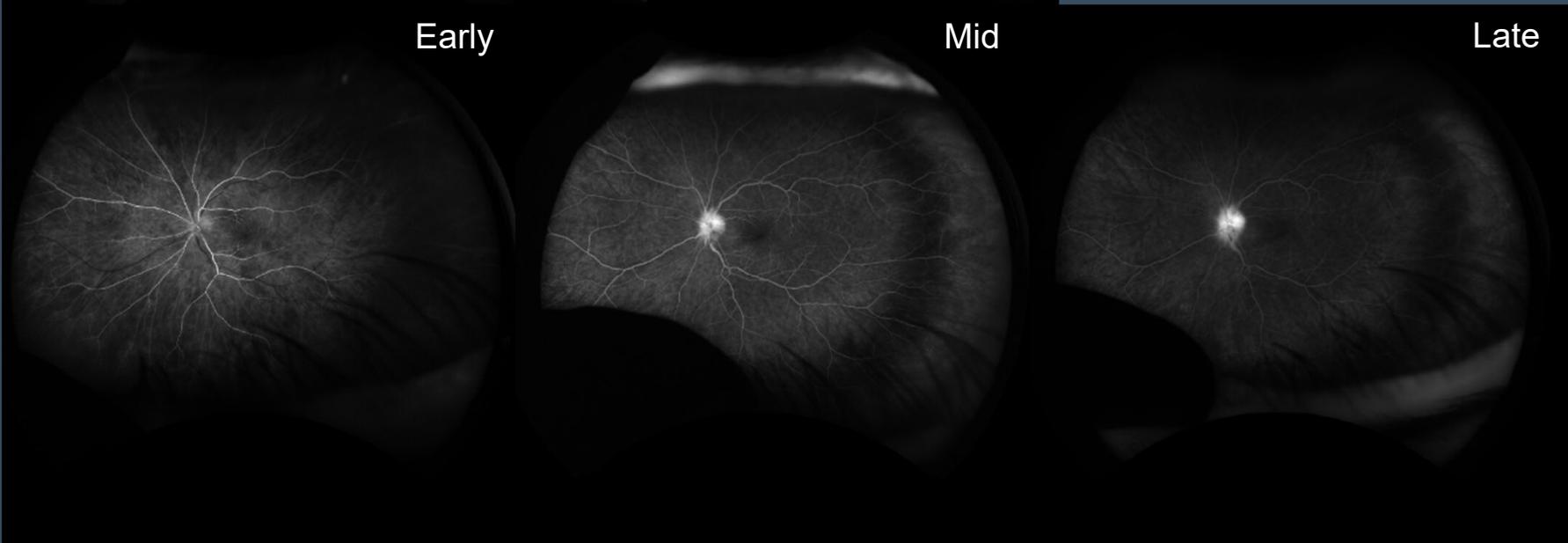




Right
Eye



Left
Eye



Initial Work-up

- MRI Brain, Orbit, MRV: normal
- CTA Head & Neck: normal
- ESR & CRP: normal
- CBC: elevated WBCs
- ACE, TB, Lyme, Bartonella: NEG

One LAST Clue



Image Adapted from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al_Capone#/media/File:Al_Capone_in_1930.jpg. Accessed Feb 2026.

AI Image generated by Gemini 3, Google, Feb 2026.

Ocular Syphilis = Neuro Syphilis

...Syphilis

Womp Womp

- Admitted to neurology with ID consult
- Underwent LP
- IV PCN therapy

Case 3: Unilateral Disc Edema

- HPI: 8/26/2024
 - 37yo WM presents with one day history of blurry vision OD

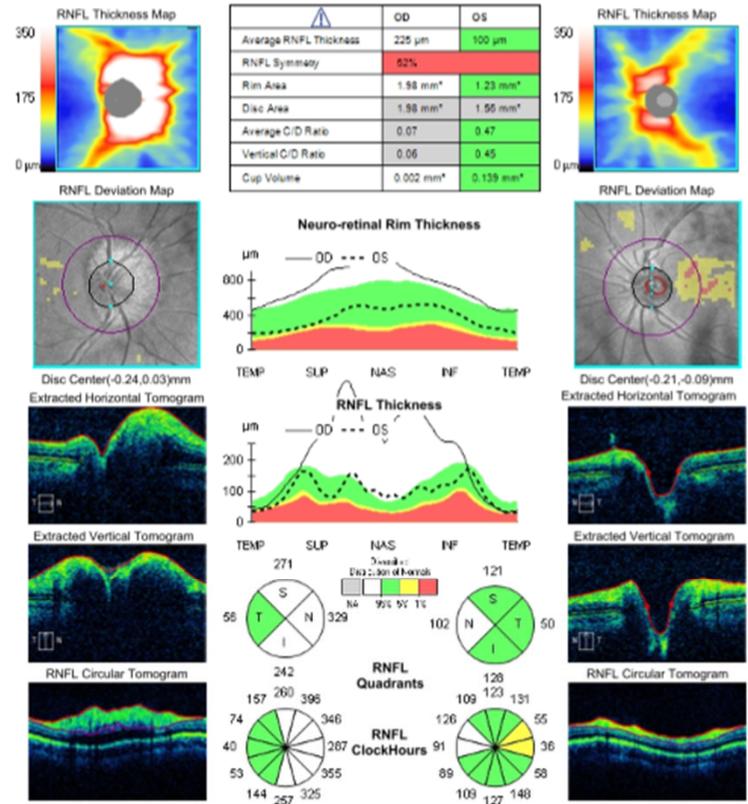
PMH:	Medications:	Ocular Hx:	Baseline Exam:												
None	None	None	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">VA</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>OD 20/30</td> <td>OS 20/30</td> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="2">IOP</th> </tr> <tr> <td>OD 22</td> <td>OS 19</td> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="2">Pupils</th> </tr> <tr> <td>OD PERRL; No RAPD</td> <td>OS PERRL; No RAPD</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	VA		OD 20/30	OS 20/30	IOP		OD 22	OS 19	Pupils		OD PERRL; No RAPD	OS PERRL; No RAPD
VA															
OD 20/30	OS 20/30														
IOP															
OD 22	OS 19														
Pupils															
OD PERRL; No RAPD	OS PERRL; No RAPD														

- Normal Anterior SLE



Name: **BADORREK, RYAN A** **OD** **OS** **ZEISS**
 ID: 88354773 Exam Date: 8/26/2024 8/26/2024 LES_REJ_OCT
 DOB: 10/15/1987 Exam Time: 3:11 PM 3:11 PM
 Gender: Male Serial Number: 5000-5987 5000-5987
 Technician: Operator, Cirrus Signal Strength: 6/10 5/10

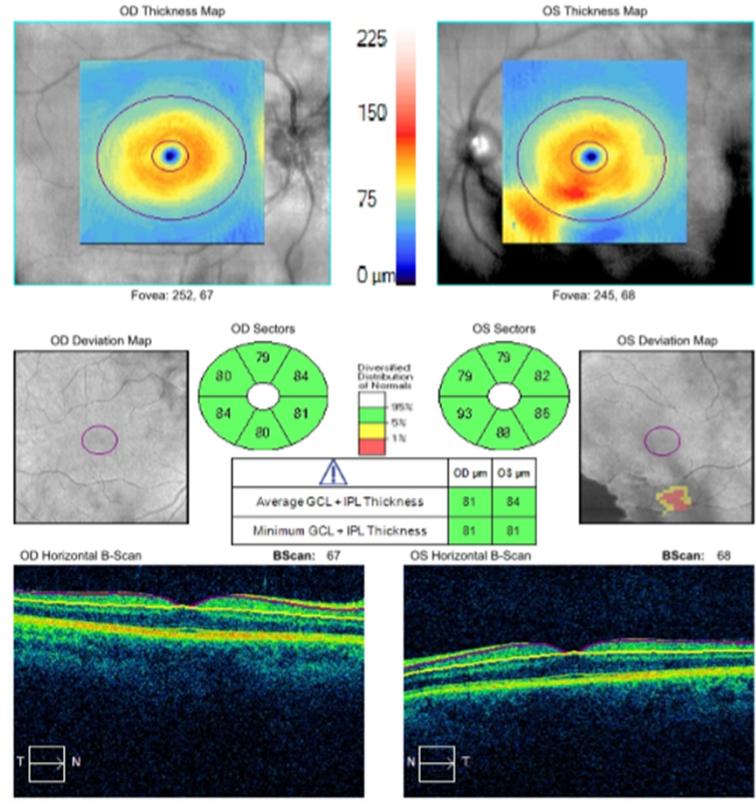
ONH and RNFL OU Analysis: Optic Disc Cube 200x200 **OD** **OS**



Comments: _____ Doctor's Signature: _____ LES_REJ_OCT
 SW Ver: 11.5.3.61246
 Copyright 2021
 Carl Zeiss Meditec, Inc
 All Rights Reserved
 Page 1 of 1

Name: **BADORREK, RYAN A** **OD** **OS** **ZEISS**
 ID: 88354773 Exam Date: 8/26/2024 8/26/2024 LES_REJ_OCT
 DOB: 10/15/1987 Exam Time: 3:10 PM 3:12 PM
 Gender: Male Serial Number: 5000-5987 5000-5987
 Technician: Operator, Cirrus Signal Strength: 8/10 6/10

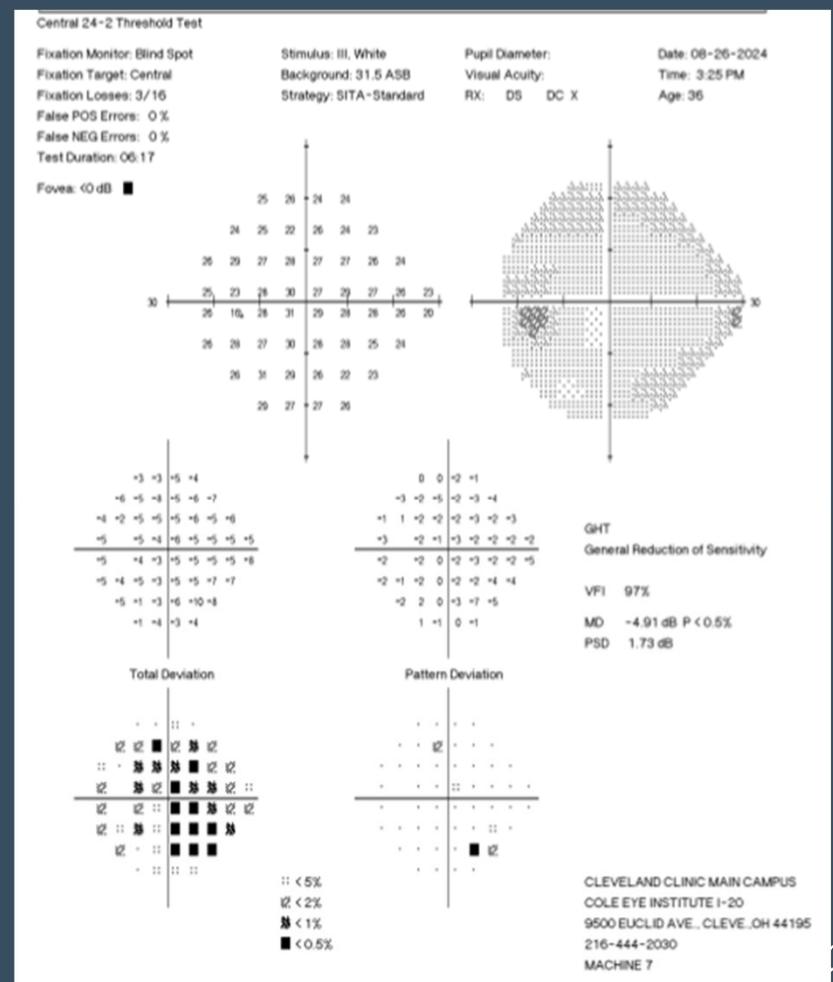
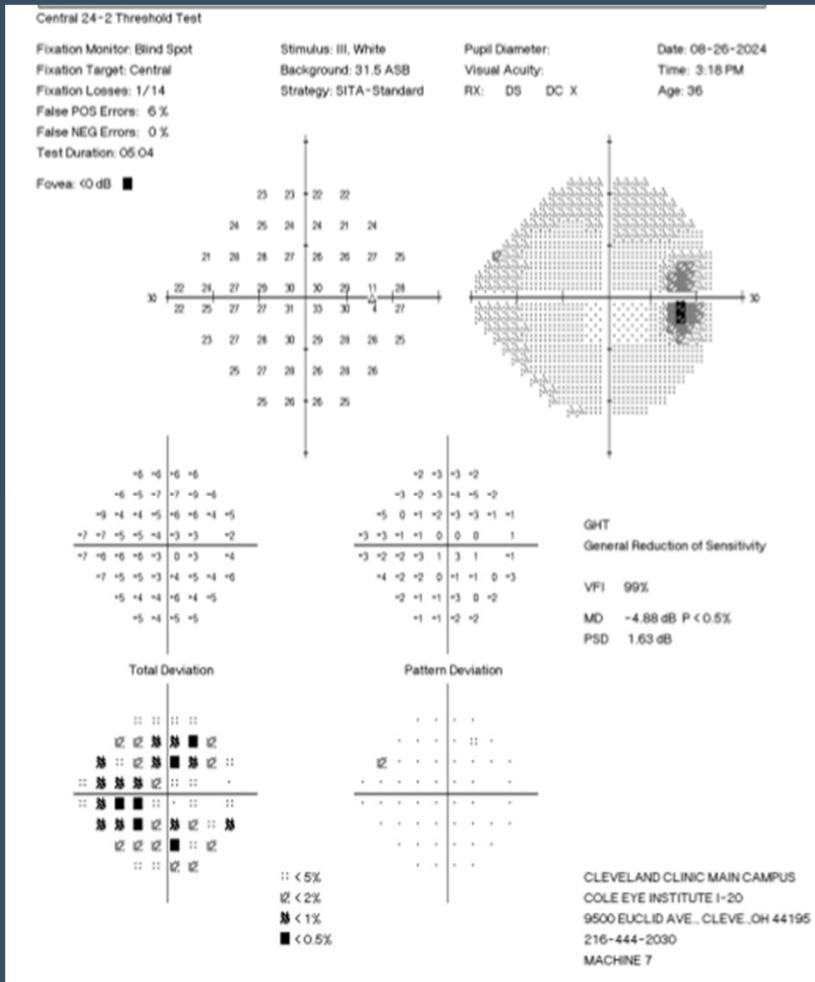
Ganglion Cell OU Analysis: Macular Cube 512x128 **OD** **OS**



Comments: _____ Doctor's Signature: _____ LES_REJ_OCT
 SW Ver: 11.5.3.61246
 Copyright 2021
 Carl Zeiss Meditec, Inc
 All Rights Reserved
 Page 1 of 1

Right Eye

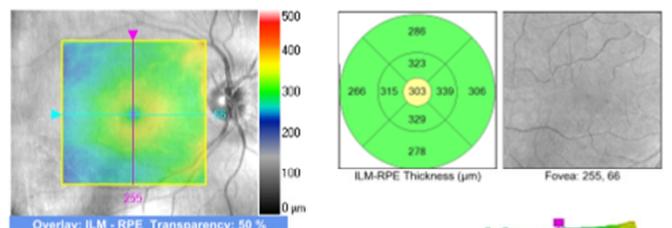
Left Eye



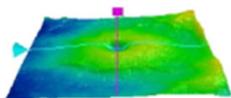
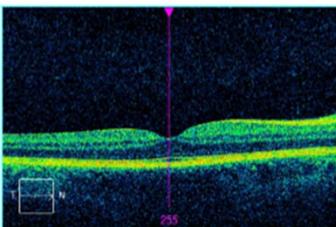
Name: **BADORREK, RYAN A**
 ID: 88354773 Exam Date: 9/13/2024 LES_REJ_OCT
 DOB: 10/15/1987 Exam Time: 2:36 PM
 Gender: Male Serial Number: 5000-5987
 Technician: Operator, Cirrus Signal Strength: 7/10



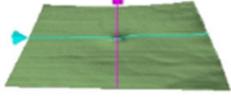
Macula Thickness : Macular Cube 512x128 OD OS



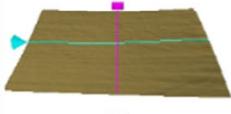
Overlay: ILM - RPE Transparency: 50 %



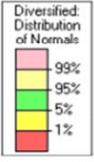
ILM - RPE



ILM



RPE



	Central Subfield Thickness (μm)	Cube Volume (mm ³)	Cube Average Thickness (μm)
ILM - RPE	303	10.5	293

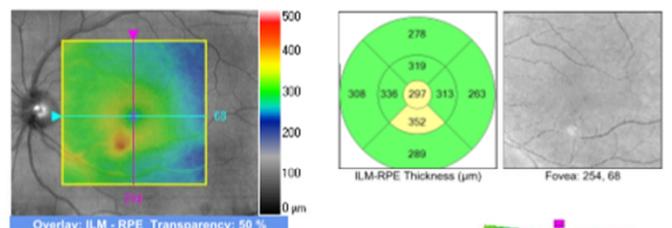
Comments: _____ Doctor's Signature: _____
 LES_REJ_OCT SW Ver: 11.5.3.61246 Copyright 2021 Carl Zeiss Meditec, Inc All Rights Reserved Page 1 of 1



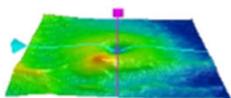
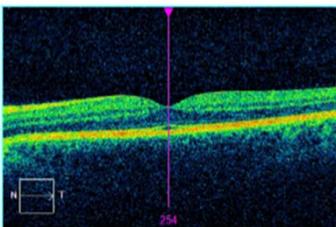
Name: **BADORREK, RYAN A**
 ID: 88354773 Exam Date: 9/13/2024 LES_REJ_OCT
 DOB: 10/15/1987 Exam Time: 2:38 PM
 Gender: Male Serial Number: 5000-5987
 Technician: Operator, Cirrus Signal Strength: 8/10



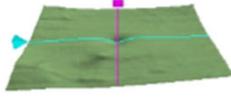
Macula Thickness : Macular Cube 512x128 OD OS



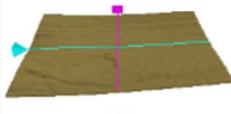
Overlay: ILM - RPE Transparency: 50 %



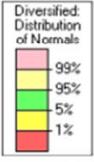
ILM - RPE



ILM



RPE



	Central Subfield Thickness (μm)	Cube Volume (mm ³)	Cube Average Thickness (μm)
ILM - RPE	297	10.5	290

Comments: _____ Doctor's Signature: _____
 LES_REJ_OCT SW Ver: 11.5.3.61246 Copyright 2021 Carl Zeiss Meditec, Inc All Rights Reserved Page 1 of 1

Initial Work-Up

- CRP; ESR; A1C; CMP; CBC: negative
- ACE; Syphilis: negative
- MRI Brain & Orbit WWO: normal

More Work-Up...

- POSITIVE:
 - Bartonella Ab panel
 - **B Henselae IgG - >1:1024**
 - B Henselae IgM - < 1:16
 - B Quintana IgG - < 1:16
 - B Quintana IgM - < 1:16
- Treated with doxycycline 100mg bid
- Follow up exam 10/8/2024 shows improved disc edema OD

Unilateral Disc Edema

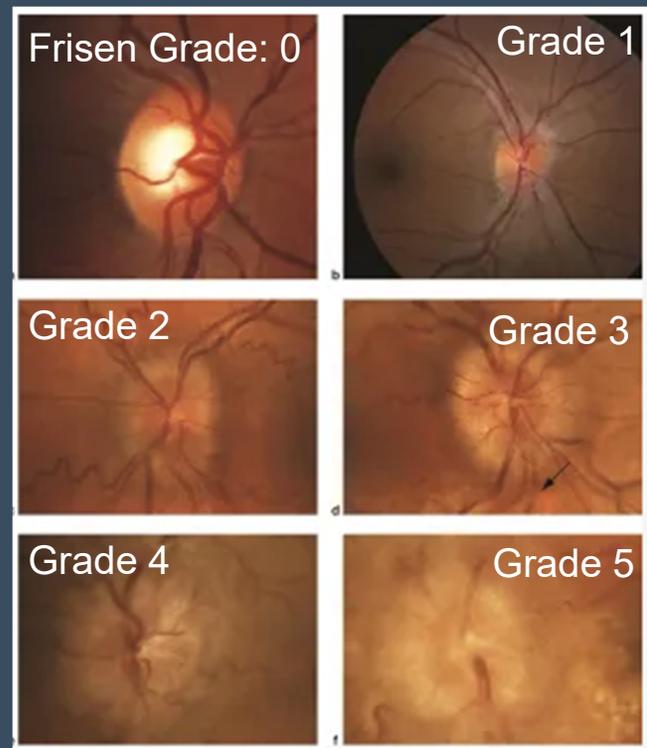
- What can we do in our office??
 - CHECK PUPILS!!!
 - Check Color Vision
 - Get a HVF (24-2 Sita Fast OU)
 - Get photos if you can
 - OCT RNFL & GCL
 - Consider UWFA and FAF

Unilateral Disc Edema

- At minimum in patients >50yo:
 - CBC
 - CRP
 - ESR

Unilateral Disc Edema

- What else is reasonable??
 - Syphilis
 - TB
 - ACE
 - Lyme >30 & < 30 days Ab
 - Bartonella Ab / PCR
 - Toxoplasmosis Ab
 - CNS Demyelinating Panel (MOG & AQP4)
- Do I need to get imaging & what should I get???
 - MRI brain & orbits WWO



HOW DID WE DO...



Image adapted from: https://www.aol.com/articles/olympic-gold-medal-really-worth-130000637.html?utm_source=spotim&utm_medium=spotim_recirculation&spot_im_comment_id=sp_ljnMf2Jd_23501346_c_4CW0IC&spot_im_highlight_immediate=true. Accessed Feb 2026



EVENT 3: BILATERAL DISC EDEMA

Bilateral Disc Edema

- This patient needs neuroimaging
- Send them to the ED – MRI brain & orbits WWO, MRV, BP, LP, etc...



**GET OUTTA
HERE**





Image adapted from: https://www.aol.com/articles/olympic-gold-medal-really-worth-130000637.html?utm_source=spotim&utm_medium=spotim_recirculation&spot_im_comment_id=sp_ljnMf2Jd_23501346_c_4CW0IC&spot_im_highlight_immediate=true. Accessed Feb 2026

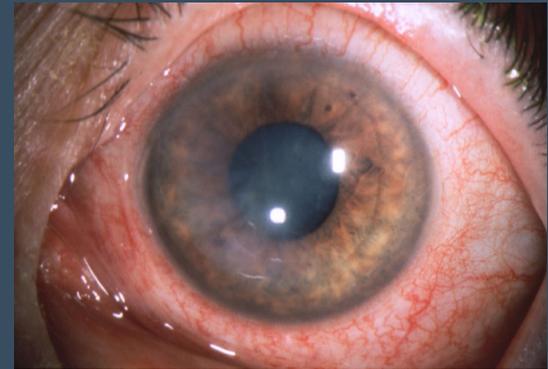


EVENT 4: HEADACHE

- The role of the ophthalmologist...

Our Main Role:

- Rule out:
 - Uveitis: anterior & posterior
 - Scleritis: anterior & posterior
 - Elevated intraocular pressure
 - Anisocoria
 - Papilledema
 - EOM Deficits
 - Refractive Error



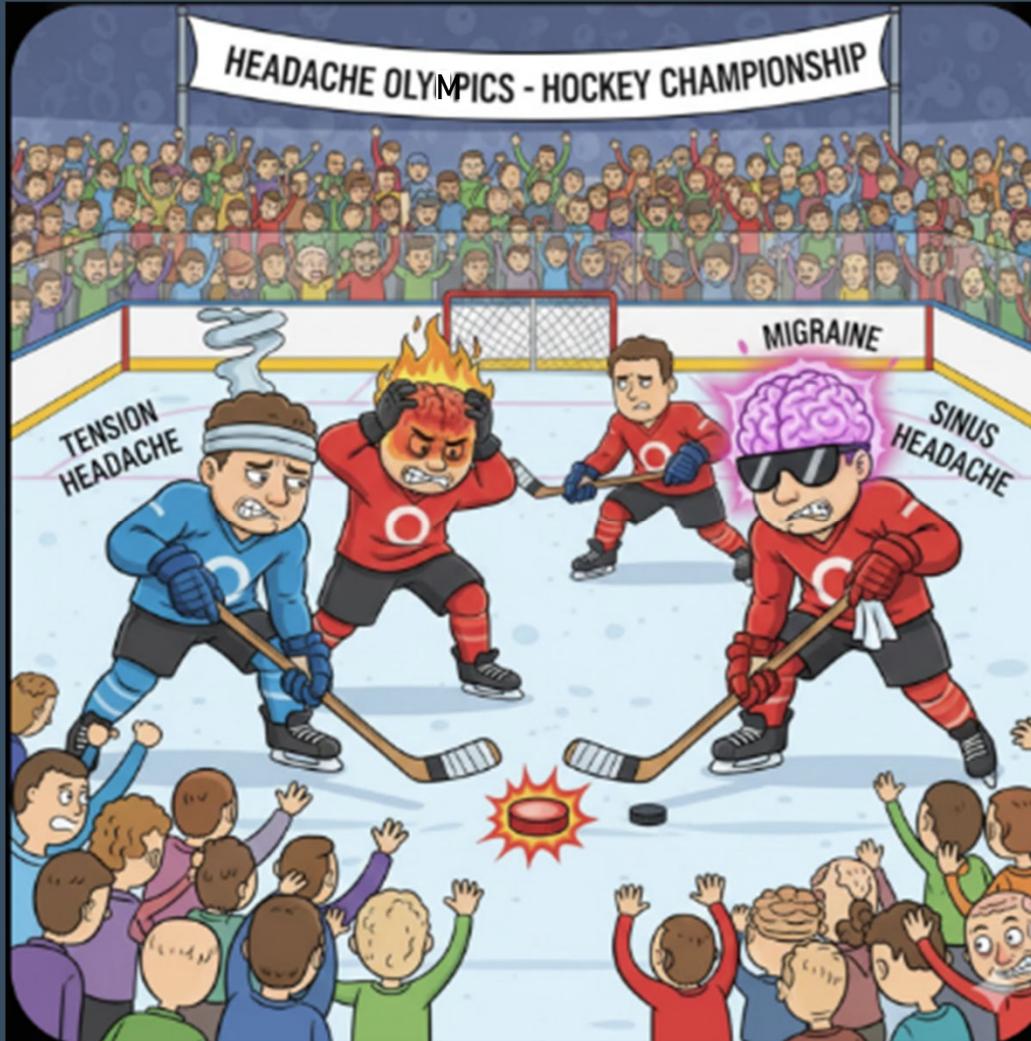
Migraine

- Key Points:
 - Aura <60 minutes
 - Followed by headache
 - Known history of migraine
- Send for work-up if:
 - New in onset (especially >50yo)
 - Different from prior migraines or headaches
 - Aura lasting >60 minutes
 - Additional focal neurologic deficits
 - GCA positive ROS & >50yo

Red Flag Headaches

- GCA Symptoms & >50yo
- Thunderclap Description
- Focal neurologic signs / confusion
- Papilledema on exam
- Associated with:
 - Fever, Valsalva, Positional Change, Exertion
- Intractable or progressive worsening





HOW DID
WE DO...



Image adapted from: https://www.aol.com/articles/olympic-gold-medal-really-worth-130000637.html?utm_source=spotim&utm_medium=spotim_recirculation&spot_im_comment_id=sp_ljnMf2Jd_23501346_c_4CW0IC&spot_im_highlight_immediate=true. Accessed Feb 2026



EVENT 5: CRANIAL NEUROPATHIES

Cranial Nerve Palsies

CN III – Oculomotor Nerve

- Elevation, Adduction & Depression of the eye
- Pupil & eye lid (levator palpebrae)
- Diplopia +/- ophthalmoplegia, anisocoria, ptosis

CN IV – Trochlear Nerve

- Extorsion, Elevation & Adduction
- Diplopia & head tilt

CN VI – Abducens Nerve

- Abduction of the eye
- Diplopia

Questions to Ask the Patient:



⊘ Elevation



⊘ Adduction



⊘ Depression

Is the double vision horizontal or vertical?

Does it get worse when you look left or right?

Is it better if you tilt your head to your left or right shoulder?

Did it happen quickly or slowly progressive over time?

Is it present in primary gaze and for how much of the day?

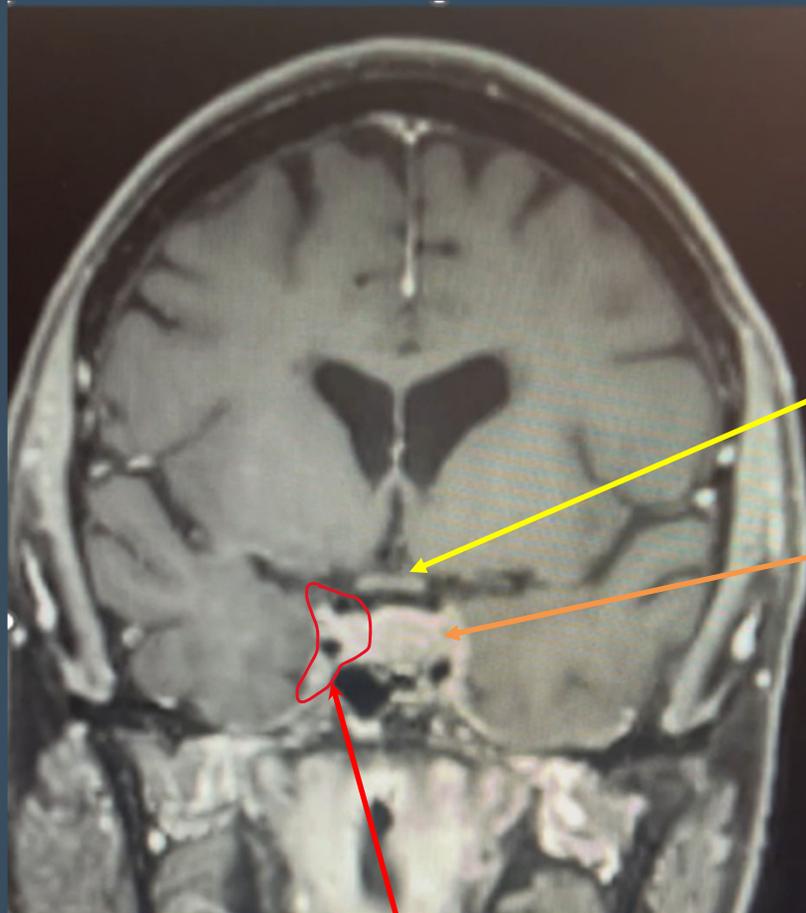
Is it worse in the morning or at night?

Questions to Ask Yourself:

- Is there associated ptosis
- Is there anisocoria
- Is there any eyelid movement (ie: aberrant regeneration) with downgaze or Adduction
- Is it comitant
 - What is comitant again?!
 - When the prismatic measurement is the ~same in every direction of gaze
- Was Parks-Bielschowsky an Olympic cross-country skier?

Multiple Cranial Nerves???

1. Orbital Apex
2. Cavernous Sinus



Optic chiasm

Sellar Mass

Cavernous Sinus



Most Common Causes of Cranial Neuropathies (Adults)

CN	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
III	Ischemic	Aneurysm / Compressive	Trauma
IV	Trauma	Ischemia	Congenital
VI	Ischemia	Trauma	Many

Differential Dx of Cranial Neuropathies

- D - demyelinating (MS, MOG, NMO)
- I - infectious (TB, Syphilis, Lyme, HIV, HSV, VZV)
- V - vasculitis (GCA, ANCA, SLE, etc.)
- I - ischemic (HTN, DM, CAD, etc.)
- N - neoplastic (tumor, mets, schwannomas, leptomeningeal dz)
- I - infiltrative (lymphoma, leukemia, germinoma)
- T - trauma
- I - iatrogenic
- C - compressive (aneurysm, meningioma, hemorrhage, vascular malformation)

Locations: midbrain, pons, skull base, cavernous sinus, orbital apex

Cranial Neuropathy Work-Up (Adults)

- MRI brain WWO
- MRA or CTA (CN III with Pupil)
- CBC, CRP, ESR
- Syphilis & TB
- Acetylcholine Receptor Antibody Panel
- Thyroid Testing (TSH, TSI, Thyroglobulin Ab)



HOW DID WE DO...



Image adapted from: https://www.aol.com/articles/olympic-gold-medal-really-worth-130000637.html?utm_source=spotim&utm_medium=spotim_recirculation&spot_im_comment_id=sp_ljnMf2Jd_23501346_c_4CW0IC&spot_im_highlight_immediate=true. Accessed Feb 2026

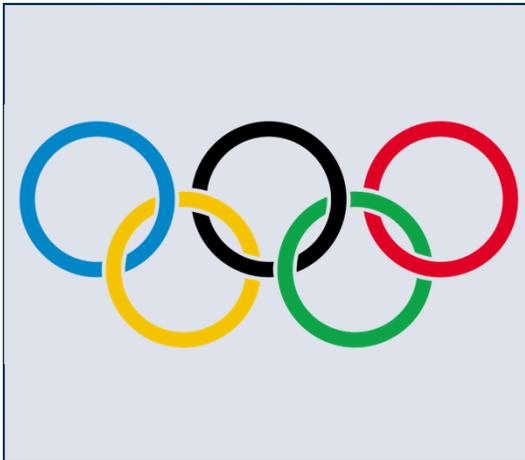
GIANT CELL ARTERITIS



UNILATERAL DISC EDEMA



BILATERAL DISC EDEMA



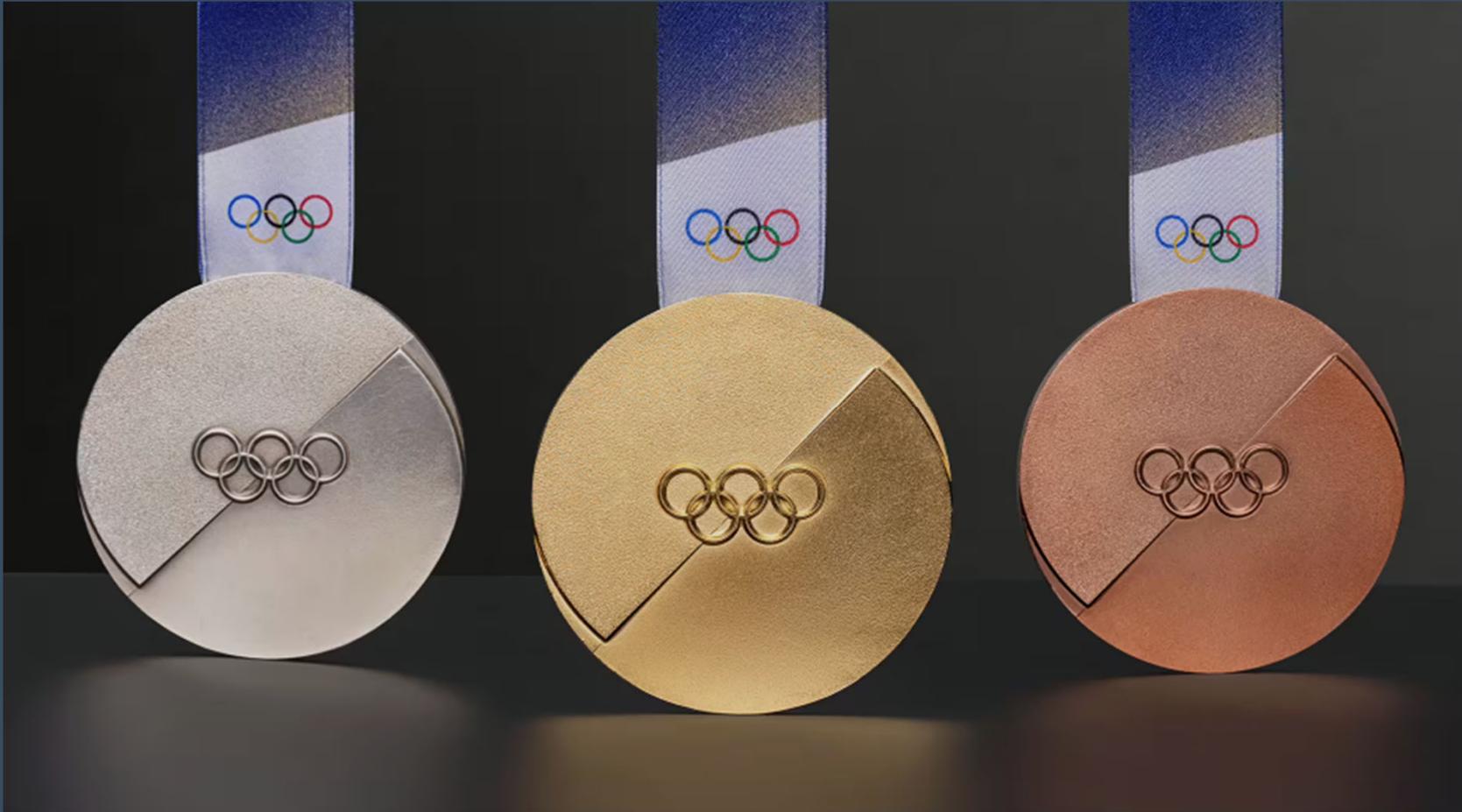
HEADACHE



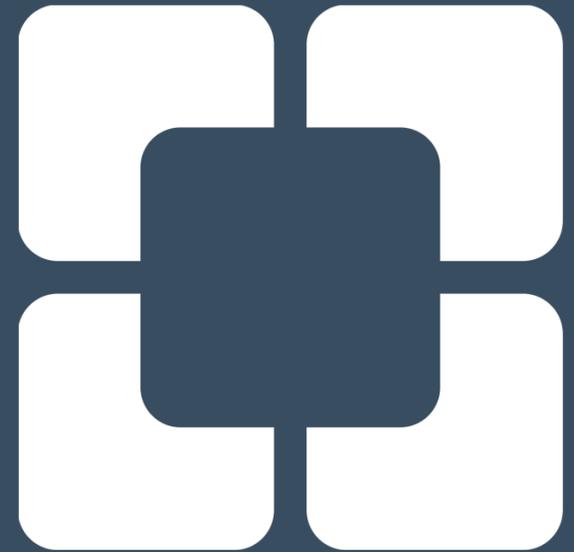
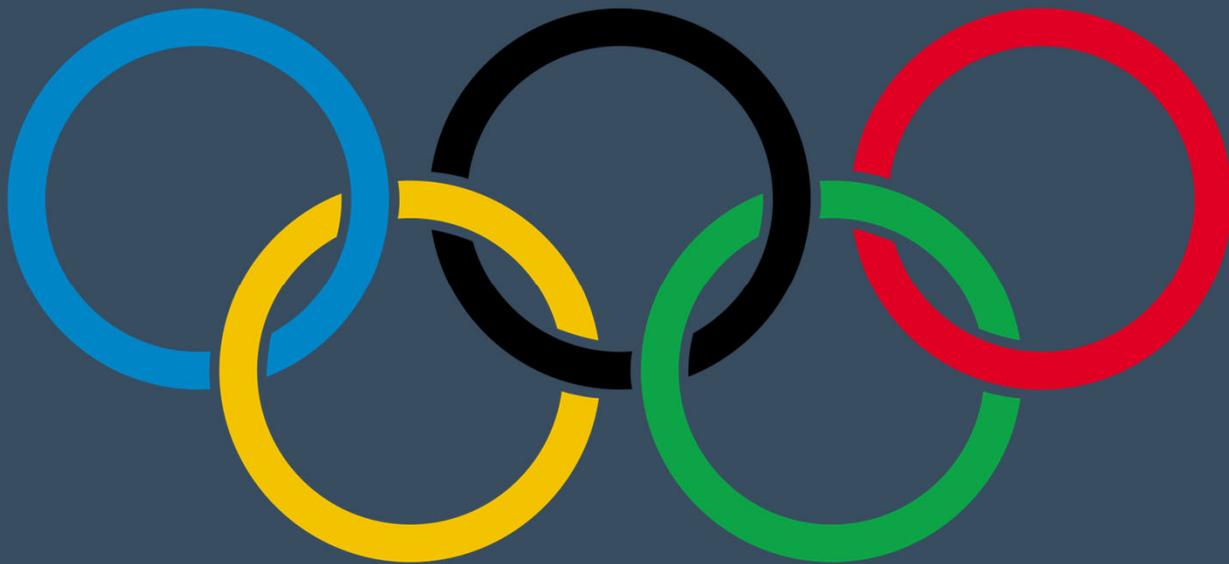
CRANIAL NEUROPATHIES



ARE YOU ON THE PODIUM?



WE ARE OLYMPIC NEURO-OPHTHALMOLOGISTS



WE ARE OLYMPIC NEURO-OPHTHALMOLOGISTS



THANK YOU!!

