



**RESEARCH SAVING SIGHT,  
RESTORING VISION**

an Initiative of the  
Alliance for Eye and Vision Research

## **THE ALLIANCE FOR EYE AND VISION RESEARCH**

*In conjunction with:*

**Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB)**

**Assoc for Research in Vision/Ophthalmology (ARVO)**

**American Society of Retina Specialists (ASRS)**

**JDRF**

**Lions Clubs International**

*continues its series of educational briefings on exciting new developments in eye  
and vision research by inviting you to a Congressional Briefing*

### ***NEI's Diabetic Retinopathy Clinical Research (DRCR) Retina Network: Optimizing Treatment for Diabetic Eye Disease Patients***

**Wednesday, May 25, 2022**

**Live Streamed 12 Noon - 1:15 pm Eastern**

**Featuring DRCR Retina Network Chairs:**



Jennifer Sun, MD, MPH  
Joslin Diabetes Center/Harvard  
Medical School



Daniel F. Martin, MD  
Cole Eye Institute/Cleveland Clinic

**Link to: [https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_IXvauayPRSGvQQhB2ZEcUw](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_IXvauayPRSGvQQhB2ZEcUw)**

**AEVR, a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Educational Foundation, is pleased to host through its *Research Saving Sight, Restoring Vision Initiative* this widely attended virtual global event, with streaming support by ARVO and event management support by Regeneron.**

***NEI's Diabetic Retinopathy Clinical Research Retina Network:  
Optimizing Treatment for Diabetic Eye Disease***

**May 25, 2022, Live Streamed 12:00 – 1:15 pm Eastern**

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**What is Diabetic Eye Disease, and Why is it Important?**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimated that, as of 2014, 29.1 million Americans had diabetes (9.3 percent of the population), with 8.1 million of these individuals unaware they have it. Another 86 million Americans are pre-diabetic. Diabetic eye disease is the primary cause of vision loss and blindness in the industrialized world among individuals age 25-74—the “working age” population. Diabetes causes damage to the blood vessels in the light-sensitive tissue in the back of the eye known as the retina. Damage to these vessels can lead to leakage of fluid into the center of the retina, known as the macula, and loss of healthy blood flow to the retina overall. Leakage or swelling in the macula is known as diabetic macular edema and is a common cause of central vision loss in people with diabetes. When capillary damage becomes more severe, blood flow is severely compromised leading to growth of abnormal blood vessels that can lead to severe bleeding inside the eye (vitreous hemorrhage), retinal detachment, and complete loss of vision if left untreated. These retinal changes, collectively known as diabetic retinopathy (DR) occurred in 7.7 million Americans in 2010 and 14.6 million cases by 2050.

**How is Federal Research Funding Developing New Treatments for Diabetic Eye Disease Patients?**

In the early 1970s, the National Eye Institute (NEI) within the National Institutes of Health (NIH) conducted the Diabetic Retinopathy Study (DRS), the first successful multicenter randomized clinical trial ever sponsored by the NIH. This landmark study showed that laser photocoagulation is highly effective for reducing the risk of vitreous hemorrhage, retinal detachment, and loss of vision from diabetes. The Early Treatment Diabetic Retinopathy Study (ETDRS), followed the DRS and produced its own set of landmark results—that focal laser treatment is effective for preventing vision loss from diabetic macular edema and also refined criteria for laser treatment of DR.

In 2002, the NEI/NIH sponsored the Diabetic Retinopathy Clinical Research (DRCR) Network. This vibrant Network of more than 500 retina specialists at more than 160 participating sites, including university and community health centers, has conducted more than 25 clinical studies evaluating new treatments for all aspects of diabetic retinopathy. Among their many achievements, the Network was the first to report definitive studies showing that anti-VEGF (Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor) therapy is more effective than laser treatment for diabetic macular edema, that all three of current anti-VEGF drugs are equally effective for treatment of mild macular edema but that one drug is more effective than the others for more severe disease, and that the most severe forms of DR can be effectively treated with anti-VEGF agents that results in reversal of DR in many cases. The Network is now entitled the DRCR Retina Network, recognizing its expansion by the NEI to include the study of all retinal diseases, such as age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and other common retinal conditions.

DRCR Retina Network Chairs Daniel F. Martin, MD (Cole Eye Institute/Cleveland Clinic) and Jennifer K. Sun, MD, MPH (Joslin Diabetes Center/Harvard Medical School) will discuss the Network's clinical research and patient care goals as it has expanded its scope to address all diseases of the retina. The DRCR Retina Network has been funded through the NEI and the Special Diabetes Program funding managed by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), leveraged with private funding from JDRF and industry.

**About the Speakers....**

**Daniel F. Martin, MD** is Chair of the Cleveland Clinic Cole Eye Institute, the Barbara and A. Malachi Mixon III Institute Chair in Ophthalmology, and Professor of Ophthalmology in the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine of Case Western Reserve University.

**Jennifer Sun, MD, MPH** is an Investigator in the Section on Vascular Biology, Chief of the Center for Clinical Trials and Eye Research at the Beetham Eye Institute/Joslin Diabetes Center, and Associate Professor at Harvard Medical School.