

The XV ISD-DE Congress, Tallinn, Estonia

Newer Dry Eye Treatments

News from ISD-DE - May 2026

As we approach the XVth Congress of the International Society of Dacryology and Dry Eye in Estonia, 17th to 19th June, we take a minute to reflect where and how ISD-DE originated and who we are now.

Our History and evolution

Initially we started as the International Society of Dacryology (ISD), thanks to Frank Holly and Juan del Castillo Murube. The first Congress was considered the meeting by Frank Holly in Texas in 1984, which led to an amazing multi-author publication called "The Preocular Tear Film in Health, Disease, and Contact Lens Wear," published in 1986 and almost 1000 pages long. I managed to get a copy and realise it laid the path to modern Dacryology.

We have always been about both dry eyes and watering eyes, which is the speciality of Dacryology, made up now of both corneal and external eye disease and oculoplastic lacrimal specialist ophthalmologists.

30 years after Holly´s book, the tear film still unites corneal and oculoplastic / lacrimal ophthalmologists, and we continue to discuss shared advances. We remain concerned with the dynamic unit of eyelid health and function, tear film quantity, integrity and constituents, and tear drainage pathways and dynamics. It is both medical and surgical, and increasingly less invasive and energy treatments.

It is audacious for an Oculoplastic surgeon to tell you about new treatments for dry eyes, but since I realised the close relationship between eyelids, tears / cornea and tear drainage, I have embraced some of the newer energy and tear conserving treatments clinically. One of my international ocular surface colleagues said to me “The Eyelids are responsible for 80% of dry eyes”. That got me thinking. How? Well, the Blink and the Meibomian Glands to start with…

So let´s talk about the following treatments:

Newer energy Treatments and Gel Canalicular Occlusion

- Thermal Light energy from OptiLight IPL
- Dynamic muscle stimulation and radiofrequency (thermal) from OptiLIFT
- Canalicular occlusion and tears conservation from LacriFill® Canalicular Gel

1. What is OptiLight IPL?

OptiLight is a Heat and Light energy out-patient specifically developed to treat the small blood vessels around the eyelids, and hence indirectly the meibomian glands. It reduces inflammation around the eyes and in the eyelids and ocular surface.

OptLight IPL is by Lumenis® and is FDA approved to treat dry eye disease (DED), ocular surface inflammation (OSI) and meibomian gland dysfunction (MGD. However, there are also many other companies also offering similar technology.

Four to five treatments are done then maintenance. OptiLight IPL treatments can be used with other energy treatments and with LacriFill®

OptiLight:

- Effective in 85 to 90% patients with ocular rosacea and acne rosacea
- Combined with post treatment meibomian gland expression MGX

2. What is OptiLFT?

OptiLIFT is dynamic muscle stimulation and RF (radiofrequency) for eyelid laxity and to improve the blink, from Lumenis®. Four treatments are required then intermittent maintenance.

- Non-invasive treatment below the eyes
- Targets weak orbicularis muscles
- Turns orbicularis back on, increases resting tone and restores the natural structure of the eyelids
- Improves blink
- Compresses MGs
- Simultaneous radiofrequency (RF) warms the skin layers and stimulates rejuvenation of the meibomian glands
- Improves TBUT (Tear break Up Time) by 286% and increases blink quality by 70%

3. What is LacriFill®?

LacriFill® is from Nordic Pharma and is a soft cross-linked hyaluronic acid gel introduced into the lacrimal canaliculus, to slow tear drainage and conserve tears on the surface of the eye. It is a CE-marked class IIb medical device, preservative free and inert.

LacriFill® lasts at least 6 months, is well tolerated and is fully reversible. It can be repeated.

In the past we had silicone punctal plugs and other intracanalicular occlusion products. The LacriFill® is logical, easy to use, and long lasting.

Patients like it.

4. Can all the above be used together?

Yes, as part of peri-operative ocular surface optimisation, before and after cataract, glaucoma, and eyelid surgery.

Yes, for dry eyes which are proving difficult to manage conservatively and with lubricant and prescription eye drops.

Yes, for people who do not want to be dependent on lubricant drops or wish to reduce the frequency of their use.

Yes almost, by corneal ocular surface and by oculoplastic lacrimal ophthalmologists as an out-patient procedure. Usually OptiLight and OptiLIFT are done together and LacriFill® on another day.

5. What if the above still do not help Dry Eye Disease?

Fortunately, there are new developments along the line, with newer prescribed topical and systemic treatments. There are also more energy and mechanical treatments!

6. Is it possible to defeat dry eyes?

Gradually yes, what we can offer now is very different from 5 years ago and in another 5 years we will offer more solutions, with a better understanding of the gut eye axis and epigenetics. In 10 to 15 years the picture will be very different. We are still doing trials.

The person or persons who fully defeat dry eyes will fully deserve the Nobel Prize for Medicine because dry eyes are such a debilitating clinical issue in the working adult, older persons and increasingly in younger persons.

See you at ISD-DE Tallinn! We will be discussing the management of dry eyes, and there is also a lot about watering eyes and surgery too.

If you can´t make it to Tallinn, keep reading our Newsletters and learn all about our plans for Members and Non-Members for 2026 to 2028!

FAST TRACK MEMBERSHIP:

It is an advantage to become a Member ISD-DE.

You will be able to:

- vote in new Committee members
- stand for Committee and other posts yourself
- elect to hold the meeting in your country
- reduced registration fee ISD-DE Congresses

And more advantages to come… Watch this space!

Membership applications to https://www.isd-de.org/about/membership/

Ms Jane Olver, FRCS, FRCOphth
President
International Society Dacryology and Dry Eye
21st May 2026
www.isd-de.org

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