

Automated Fundus Camera Brings New Capabilities to Practices

Vision Source members **Anthony Huang, OD**, and **Carleton Fong, OD**, recently added the new NIDEK AFC-330



Dr. Huang

from Marco to the practice they co-own in Foothill Ranch, Calif., as well as to Dr. Huang's practice in Bellflower.

Dr. Huang says that

it was the ease of use for the technicians and the patients that sold them on the upgraded camera. "I looked at several



Dr. Fong

of the automated fundus cameras and thought this was the simplest for the staff, plus it features nice viewing software for the doctors' use," he says. Having a fundus camera that is easy to use is critical. "The staff is more inclined to encourage patients and take the photos if it's an easy-to-use system. If it's a hassle, and the staff member has to try several times to obtain a clear image, it's not going to be a very useful addition," he adds. "Patients won't like that, either."

With the AFC-330, however, staff can capture an excellent image in very little time with its three-dimensional automatic alignment features. An AutoTrack feature detects and follows patient movements, while the AutoFocus feature simplifies the process. The AutoShot feature acquires the photo when optimal conditions are met.

"The clarity of the images is excellent," Dr. Huang says. Both doctors note that the stereoscopic viewing and other features are very helpful.

The doctors take the images on patients who are known to have or are suspects for glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration (AMD). "It can also illustrate systemic health conditions, such as elevated cholesterol and arterial sclerosis," Dr. Huang says. When the images show an area of concern, the doctors have

the option of sending the image to a specialist for consultation or referral. "If we end up referring the patient, the specialist already has a copy of the image. It smooths the transition."

Dr. Fong says the patient education aspect of having the automated fundus camera in the office is tremendous. "I want to educate our patients and show

them what I'm seeing. I go over with the patients what I'm looking at and the consequences of not taking care of their blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol." The images he can share help him get the point across to patients that they need to be compliant.

While this system has been in place for just a few months, the doctors see that

it will have continued application in the practice. In the future, they'll be able to sit with patients and compare baseline images with new fundus photos to see whether there is disease progression.

Both doctors say that AMD patients are a growing part of the practices. "Having these detailed images from the AFC assists us in detection and monitoring of AMD. We can suggest additional tests and provide nutritional counseling and supplement recommendations," Dr. Fong says.

A Novel Marketing Approach

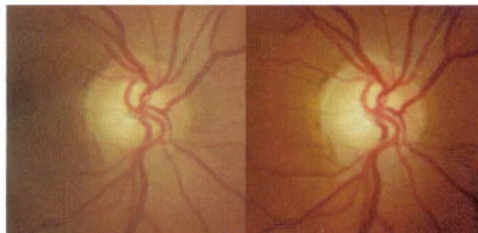
Dr. Carleton Fong says the AFC-330 from Marco has found another novel use in the practice he co-owns with Dr. Anthony Huang. "We use the retinal images as a marketing tool. At the completion of pretesting, we ask patients if they would like us to email them a copy," Dr. Fong says. While the practices have been collecting emails from patients for some time, even those patients who have not shared their email previously are usually quite keen on getting a copy of these AFC images. The practice sends a thank you note with the emailed image, encouraging the patient to contact them if they have any questions and to consider referring a friend or family member to the practice.

Patients have used these images as their Facebook profile photo or the background image on their smartphone screen. They're unique and colorful, and now they have more people talking about the practice.

PARTNER NEWS

Advanced Imaging with Ease

The Nidek AFC-330 from Marco is built on the X-Y-Z operational alignment system that has proven unique and successful for a number of Nidek-manufactured ophthalmic devices. This advanced operational platform can allow an operator of any skill level to perform advanced imaging techniques, such as stereo pairs or



Stereo pair: The AFC-330 automatically captures two images with the proper spacing and focus offset necessary to create precise and consistent stereo pairs.



Panoramic image: The AFC-330 automatically captures up to seven fields of view for automontaging with NAVIS-EX.

seven-field panoramic imaging, just as quickly and easily as single 45° photos.

For any practice looking to enhance its instrumentation with speed, accuracy and patient comfort, the AFC-330 provides a space-efficient design and embedded components that allow the camera to share valuable clinic space while connecting into the office LAN for electronic medical records or NAVIS-EX.