

Special edition celebrating Lirot's 10th anniversary



THE ISRAELI RESEARCH ASSOCIATION FOR EYE HEALTH AND BLINDNESS PREVENTION (I.R.A.)

www.lirot.org



Conferences, Eye Exams, Events

Nadine Hollander CEO Lirot

LIROT was established in 2006 with the unique goal to fight blindness through preventive medicine and medical research. In the past 10 years, we succeeded in funding 21 different research projects, all associated with causes of blindness and all of translational nature. The funds for these projects were allocated through efforts by LIROT and distributed by

the Ministry of Health's Chief Scientist.

We also organize annual Sight Preserving Days in which LIROT volunteers travel to different communities around the country and explain the importance of annual checkups to prevent sight threatening disorders. In 2013, we embarked on a new project in which we purchased a mobile checkup unit to provide eye examinations to the elderly in need.

Why it is important to promote eye research in Israel?

- Israel is a world leader in ophthalmologic research
- There is a high incidence of hereditary eye diseases in Israel
- The cost of research in Israel is much lower than in the USA
- Israeli researchers enjoy worldwide recognition in the field of eye health care

- To read more about our ten-year research projects written by Prof. Ido Perlman, chair of Lirot's scientific council and Dr Shiri Soudry, go to www.lirot.org

Mapping Genetic Eye Diseases in Israel

A nation-wide project for mapping genetic causes of retinal degenerative diseases known as Retinitis Pigmentosa (e.g. RP, Usher Syndrome, Stargard and Best diseases, Rod-cone and Cone-Rod Dystrophies and more) is already in its third year with very good results.

This national research project is based on a collaboration of researchers from all the main medical institutions in Israel, including Hadassah University Hospital, Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center, Soroka Medical Center, Rabin Medical Center, Rambam Medical Center, Bnai-Zion Medical Center, Assaf Harofe Hospital, Tel Hashomer and the Technion.

The results of this mapping research will have a great impact on blindness prevention research worldwide, since it will give researchers a ready database for clinical trials of treatments that are personalized to specific diseases of specific genetic mutations.

For more information, read Prof. Dror Sharon's article on our website, www.lirot.org.

Eye health mobile project for elderly in need

Since 2013, Lirot's eye health mobile for the elderly in need and Holocaust survivors has examined over 11,000 senior citizens throughout Israel, and has saved 30% of those examined from severe vision problems and, on occasion, blindness, thanks to their urgent referral to hospitals or for treatment at their HMO. The mobile unit travels to nursing homes, day centers, senior citizen centers, kibbutzim and moshavim throughout the country, with an emphasis on the periphery. We are reaching out to

senior citizens who are unable to arrive for testing on their own due to physical or financial difficulties, or as a result of a lack of awareness.

Our goal was to reduce by 10% the number of those who suffer from three of the most common causes of blindness - Macular Degeneration, Diabetic Retinopathy and Glaucoma - by using early screening methods, and we exceeded this goal by far.

Lirot 10 years achievements

- 16 million shekel financed tens of research projects in blindness prevention
- Providing annual scholarships for exceptional young researchers
- 8 consecutive years promoting the Annual Eye Health Awareness Month
- Ophthalmology conferences for at risk populations
- Three Internet websites with live seminars and forums on eye diseases
- Vision screening for thousands of children in kindergartens to detect amblyopia and sight problems that can be cured by treatment by an ophthalmologist.
- 11,000 eye checkups of senior citizens and Holocaust survivors all over Israel using the Eye Mobile.
- 30% of the elderly checked were saved from vision impairment or blindness
- 27,000 hours of volunteers, doctors and professionals supporting Lirot's activities in blindness prevention.

To summarize, Lirot has acted and will continue to act to promote applied research relevant to ophthalmological diseases, for the promotion of insights that will lead to developing ways to prevent blindness and restore the sight of patients suffering from degenerative retinal diseases and diseases that can be treated by the advanced medical care in Israel.

All of the projects described would not have been possible without the many volunteers

and donors in Israel and abroad, whom we thank for their generous support:

Lirot association board and scientific council members, The Israel Ophthalmology society, Government agencies, the National Insurance Institute, the Estate Fund, the Ministries of Health and Welfare, the Herzliya Municipality, The Yad Hanadiv Foundation, the Arison Foundation, the Schocken Foundation; pharmaceutical companies such as Novartis, Bayer, Dr. Fisher, Tradis Gat, Lapidot, Teva, Abbvie and others; companies such as Discount Bank, Mega and Dor Alon, Einaim, Ein Tal; overseas organizations and foundations: The Edith Blum Foundation, La Fondation pour la memoire de la Shoa, The Levin Foundation of Ohio, Foundation Fighting Blindness, The Lidsky Foundation; Hilfe für Blinde in Israel Foundation; The American Friends of Lirot Board and pro bono support from many advertising agencies, including TBWA and Cinema City in Israel.

WITH YOUR HELP WE WILL BE ABLE TO SAVE THE DIMINISHING SIGHT OF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PATIENTS

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