

Prit Oat Sinchai, MD Ophthalmology

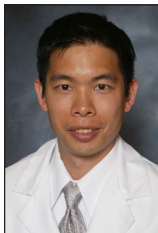
Why did you come here from the Midwest and how is your practice here different?

I basically moved here in 2008 to escape the cold weather. I finally had enough of shoveling snow, scraping ice off my windshield and suffering through the sub-zero degree winters. After looking at multiple locations in southern California, I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to join the practice of Dr. Charles Keller.

One of the differences I have found in practicing medicine here in Orange County is that patients are very proactive and well-informed. I really enjoy taking the time to educate my patients, which helps them become more involved in their own care. Also, managed care is so much more prevalent here, which has taken some getting used to. I think it makes communication between the different specialties and primary care more essential.

What's exciting and new in your field?

Improvements in lens implants have had a huge impact on cataract surgery, not only improving



the vision of many patients, but also reducing their need for eyeglasses. These lens implants are continuing to evolve and will get even better over time. I think the next big change in cataract surgery will be Femtosecond lasers, which will further improve outcomes in this already highly successful procedure.

Newer surgical techniques have also been developed for glaucoma, such as the ExPress mini-shunt. I was actually the first to perform this procedure at St. Joseph Hospital. I have found that with the ExPress mini-shunt there is less inflammation, which has translated to improved outcomes and has allowed for a more comfortable post-op period in my glaucoma patients. Another exciting technique is canaloplasty, which is a non-penetrating surgery that reduces intraocular pressure with fewer risks of complications. Despite these new developments, the key in glaucoma is still aggressive screening and early diagnosis. Although there is still no cure for glaucoma, if caught early enough, optic nerve damage can be slowed down with treatment and blindness can be prevented.

What concerns you about healthcare reform?

I don't understand how we can reduce healthcare costs and still provide quality care for a greater number of patients. I believe that our healthcare

system needs to undergo some sort of reform, but physicians and patients should have more input in the process of reforming the system rather than politicians or insurance companies.

How did you choose ophthalmology?

My father was an ophthalmologist, so I was exposed to the field early in my life. The surgeries in ophthalmology are technologically advanced and very successful. It's really amazing to be able to improve someone's vision so quickly, and to make such a significant difference in their lives.

What does life outside of work look like?

My time is spent with my wife, Mary Beth Sinchai, MD, who is a family practitioner and medical acupuncturist based in Irvine, and our seven-year-old daughter, who plays soccer and golf. I also enjoy golfing, going to the beach and eating all different types of food.

Dr. Sinchai completed his medical degree at Indiana University, an internship at the Illinois Masonic Medical Center in Chicago, and a residency at Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, D.C. After spending two years in private practice in Indiana, he went on to complete fellowship training in glaucoma at the University of Illinois Eye and Ear Infirmary.



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