MRF Melanoma Research Foundation
Cure Ocular Melanoma



Dear CURE OM Community,

Welcome to the Spring edition of Eye on OM Quarterly Newsletter! As always, we are excited to connect with you and share important OM community updates.

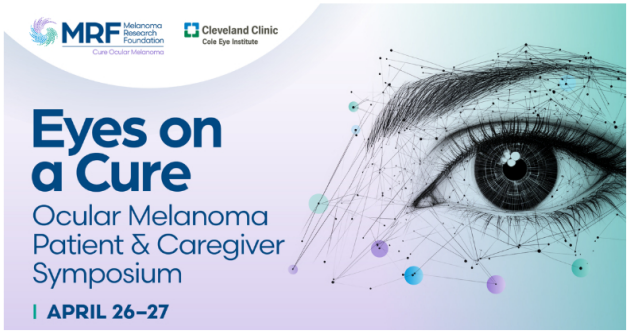
First and foremost, we are just weeks away from the Eyes on OM Patient and Caregiver Symposium, taking place this April 25-27th at the Cleveland Clinic Cole Eye Institute in Cleveland, OH. Our collective and dynamic team including patient volunteers has put together an agenda that is both informative and inspiring, and we're pleased to say it's shaping up to be an amazing event. This symposium is a wonderful opportunity for patients, caregivers and advocates to come together, learn from experts, and share in the strength of our OM community. We can't wait to see you there!

While we are excited about the future, we also want to acknowledge that it is with mixed emotions as we recently announced the departure of CURE OM founder and director, Dr. Sara Selig late last month. Though we will certainly miss her leadership and guidance, we want to reassure you that CURE OM initiative and the OM community are in very good hands—your hands. The strength and dedication of this community is what will continue to drive us forward, and we are deeply grateful for each of you and the work we do together.

We look forward to seeing you at the symposium and continuing to collaborate in support of our shared mission.

Warm regards,
Miriam Kadosh, MSW, LCSW

Director of Education and Patient Engagement



Join us for an engaging symposium featuring:

- Key developments related to **OM diagnostic and treatments**

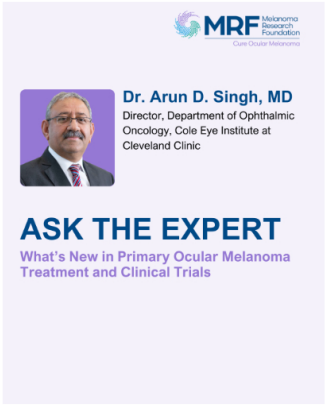
- Key developments related to **OM diagnostic and treatments**
- Insights into **OM metastatic treatment approaches**
- Interactive **Q&A panels** with experts and patients
- Essential resources on **self-advocacy and financial navigation**
- Discussions on **post-enucleation care** and **low vision adjustments**
- The importance of caring for the **caregiver**
- Don't miss our special **Sunday program** where we'll share the latest updates on **clinical trials and a baseball game!**

This year, at the Eyes on a Cure Patient and Caregiver Symposium, we will be honoring the memory of those we have lost to OM in recent years. If you'd like to share photos or stories of your loved ones, please feel free to send them to cureom@melanoma.org by April 18th. Your memories are a meaningful part of our shared journey.

In-person registration closes on April 16. Virtual registration closes on April 25.

Register Here

March Ask the Expert Recap with Dr. Arun Singh



The March Ask the Expert focused on the latest advancements in primary OM treatment and clinical Trials.

Dr. Arun Singh, Director of the Department of Ophthalmic Oncology at the Cole Eye Institute, Cleveland Clinic, discussed several promising treatments currently under investigation in clinical trials.

Click below to watch the full webinar to stay updated with the latest in OM care.

Watch Here

Advocacy Days Follow Up



The MRF welcomed 50 passionate advocates to Washington, DC, for an impactful day dedicated to advancing key federal melanoma policy priorities.

Our advocates met with 51 congressional offices across 17 states to champion:

• $40 million in funding for the Department of Defense's Melanoma Research Program (MRP) within the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP), which includes critical research investment in uveal melanoma.

• Robust funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Cancer Institute (NCI) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to support melanoma research and prevention efforts.

• Congressional action to reauthorize the Over-The-Counter Monograph User Fee Program (OMUFA) helping to bring more sunscreen filters to market and improve access to sun protection for people of a variety of skin types and tones.

Our Advocacy Days were made even more special with the participation of seven members of the medical research community and welcome remarks provided by Maryland Congressman Steny Hoyer. We were honored to have MRF Breakthrough Consortium (MRFBC) Co-Chairs Dr. Rich Carvajal and Dr. Tara Mitchell join us along with three recently MRF funded research grantees. Their expertise in the field further amplified our voices and the urgency of these critical issues.

Thank you to our advocates for sharing your stories to pave the way for progress in melanoma research, prevention and treatment. Together, we are working toward a future where a cure is possible.

Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) Update

As part of last month's continuing resolution (CR) to fund the remainder of FY25, Congress proposed a 57% to the CDMRP. In response, the MRF mobilized 206 advocates who contacted 248 lawmakers urging them to vote no on the CR or support an amendment that would protect CDMRP funding. The House and Senate both passed the CR without an amendment for CDMRP, and we learned of congressional intent to reduce programs by a proportional cut across the 35 programs. However, a letter from Congressman Ken Calvert and Senator Mitch McConnell (both chairs of their respective Defense Appropriations Subcommittees) to Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth expressed congressional intent for the Defense Health Agency (DHA) to appropriate $40 million for the Melanoma Research Program (MRP) in FY25. The MRP has been a critical source of research into rare melanomas, receiving $2 million in dedicated funding since FY22. We are encouraged by Congress's intent to protect this funding going forward and encourage Secretary Hegseth to prioritize CDMRP this fiscal year.

CommUNITY/ Fundraising

Put the "fun" in fundraising with our CommUNITY Fundraising program! By raising life-saving funds, you, too, can help make a difference in melanoma research. Ready to make a difference? Host your own CommUNITY Fundraiser and help support our efforts to eradicate melanoma. Contact us at volunteer@melanoma.org to learn more and get started!

Learn More



2025 Miles for Melanoma 5k Series Kicks Off this May

During the 2024 Miles for Melanoma 5K season, we saw incredible support from the OM community, with over 15 OM-specific teams coming together to raise an impressive $57,000+ for OM research, education and advocacy. Your dedication is driving meaningful change—thank you for making this possible!

Registration is now open for our first 3 events in Washington, DC (May 3), New England, MA (May 10) and Denver, CO (June 14). Now is the perfect time to create your own OM team and join us in making an even bigger impact for the OM community. Together, we can continue to raise awareness, fund critical research and support those affected by OM.
Sign up today to be part of this incredible event and view our tentative 2025 schedule **here.**

Last year, the OM community raised over $57,599 to support OM research and educational programs! **Take a look at our 2024 recap video** to learn of what we collectively accomplished for the melanoma community **here**.

In the News: Uveal Melanoma Therapy Breakthrough

A uveal melanoma therapy has received US FDA Breakthrough Therapy Designation for Darovasertib monotherapy in neoadjuvant uveal melanoma. This therapy is intended for the neoadjuvant treatment of adult patients with primary uveal melanoma for whom enucleation has been recommended. This designation allows for expedited development and priority regulatory review of the drug. Results from the Phase 2/3 registration-enabling trial of the darovasertib and crizotinib combination in 1L HLA-A2-negative metastatic uveal melanoma are expected by the end of 2025.

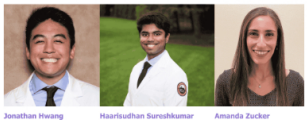
For more information on the announcement, please read the press release here.

For details on currently open and recruiting clinical trials, check out the MRF's free Clinical Trial Finder. This tool will let you search for trials or match you with a specialist who can support and answer your clinical trial questions.

Additionally, we have our Ask a Nurse resource available to you at no cost! Nurse Whitney

can be reached at askanurse@melanoma.org.

2025 Medical Student Grants: OM Research Focus



Three Medical Student Awards were given out to research projects focusing on uveal melanoma in 2025.

To learn more about the three OM research grants, visit the funded researcher webpages for Jonathan Hwang, Haarisudhan Sureshkumar and Amanda Zucker.

Support Groups: Space for Connection

We invite you to participate in our upcoming CURE OM online support groups, which take place monthly on the first Wednesday from 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM EST and on the fourth Thursday from 8:00 PM to 9:30 PM EST, specifically for patients and caregivers. These monthly groups provide a supportive environment to discuss diagnosis, treatment, medical updates, peer questions, reflections and more. CURE OM online support groups offer a safe space for OM patients to connect and share their experiences. For more information or to join a group, please reach out to cureom@melanoma.org.

A Note on the VISION Platform

Thank you for your interest in VISION. The VISION Platform is on a temporary administrative hold. If you are already enrolled in VISION you will be notified by email when the study is up and running again. If you are not already enrolled and/or have questions or concerns or require additional resources please reach out to Miriam Kadosh at mkadosh@melanoma.org. Thank you for your patience!



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