

## About the Academy

### Who We Are

The American Academy of Ophthalmology is the largest national membership association of Eye M.D.s. Eye M.D.s are ophthalmologists, medical doctors who provide comprehensive eye care, including medical, surgical and optical care. More than 90 percent of practicing U.S. Eye M.D.s are Academy members, and the Academy has more than 7,000 international members.

### The Academy's Mission

The mission of the American Academy of Ophthalmology is to advance the lifelong learning and professional interests of ophthalmologists (Eye M.D.s) to ensure that the public can obtain the best possible eye care.

### Academy History

The Academy evolved as part of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology (AAOO), which was founded in 1896 primarily to provide continuing education to eye, ear, nose and throat doctors.

The American Academy of Ophthalmology was incorporated as an independent organization in 1979 when the AAOO was divided into separate academies for each specialty.

### The Academy Today

The American Academy of Ophthalmology is an association of Eye M.D.s dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for every individual they treat by helping each to see his or her best and by protecting their patients' vision and eye health throughout life. Academy members are committed to responding compassionately to their patients' individual needs and to advancing the highest standards of comprehensive eye care.

To enable its members to meet these goals, the Academy provides a wide variety of programs, products and services to Eye M.D.s and the patients they serve.

### Additional Academy Information

The following information about the Academy is also available:

- The Academy's primary functions and programs are discussed in [Key Activities](#).
- Information about the Academy's governing structure is included in the [Governance](#) section.
- The Membership Profile provides descriptions of membership options available at the Academy.
- Information about the practice of ophthalmology is included in the [About Ophthalmology & Eye M.D.s](#) section.
- Information about the eye health and eye care professions is included in [The Eye Care Team](#).

If you have any questions, please contact the Media Relations Department at 415.561.8534 or e-mail [media@aao.org](mailto:media@aao.org).