Dr. Ganiban, who completed a prestigious wet macular degeneration," reports Dr. Ganiban, "is hopeful about going forward in treating the absence of aggressive therapy.

Vision loss can be rapid and severe in the leak fluid or blood and blur central vision. When abnormal blood vessels form under the retina, Dr. Ganiban explains, "Prior to treatments, one study patient could only see hand motion. She could not read any letters on a standard eye chart. One month following stem cell treatment, she could read five letters. But this new ability to read letters does not fully explain how much improvement the patient perceived to have experienced. This same patient reported being able to discern colors more fully, to be able to read her wrist watch and even to begin to use her computer. This is truly remarkable," Dr. Ganiban adds.

Dr. Ganiban remains cautiously optimistic, stating that while these results are exciting, they are preliminary, and that more data needs to be studied before these therapies can be applied to a broader range of patients. He reports that these initial study patients are continuing to do well, which is very encouraging.

While stem cell therapy is not a "cure" for blindness that has already occurred, the hope is that through further research, scientists and physicians may be able to apply these therapies that slow or halt the progression of the much more common dry form of macular degeneration. Should this become possible, early detection will be key to maintaining vision and quality of life for affected patients.

Retinal detachment repairs

For Chuck Helmke, clear vision is particularly critical. Chuck is the chief tactical firearms instructor at the American Police Hall of Fame, in Tiruville.

"My eyesight is critical to my business and my passion, which is teaching people how to successfully defend themselves against criminals intent upon doing harm," reports Chuck.

Chuck suffered a retinal detachment, an eye condition that can lead to blindness in the absence of timely care, but fortunately his story has a happy ending. Chuck had a retinal detachment repair by Dr. Vaishnav at The Eye Institute for Medicine & Surgery.

"I knew that there was a problem before I got to the office because of the changes I experienced in my vision and I was concerned," Chuck says. "Soon after my eyes were dilated, Dr. Vaishnav was able to examine me, and he thoroughly explained the retinal detachment, as well as how he proposed to repair it. He was very confident and I felt comfortable with him right away. My surgery was a complete success and I am grateful for having my sight restored. I trust him with my eyes completely."

Dr. Ganiban is the lead clinical investigator for a research consortium currently developing enhancements to the retinal detachment repair process. The ultimate goal of their research is to improve quality of life for retinal detachment patients by decreasing recovery time following surgery. This leading-edge research is being conducted at the University of Central Florida and the Florida Institute of Technology.

"It's really exciting when a patient tells me that, for the first time in years, they perceive that they are seeing better," Dr. Ganiban explains. "Every patient we see is someone's husband, wife, mom, dad, friend or grandparent. Dr. Vaishnav and I never lose sight of this. We treat each of our patients individually and strive to do our best. We are someone’s husband, wife, mom, dad, friend or grandparent.

Comprehensive eye evaluations

When it comes to your eyesight, only the best will do. To schedule a comprehensive eye examination with one of the specialists at The Eye Institute for Medicine & Surgery, please call 321-272-4443. They have three offices – Melbourne, Rockledge and Palm Bay.