

## Dr. David Lane

WITH LANCE EDWARDS



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~ DR. DAVID LANE

**O**n a cold afternoon in Lindsay, Ontario, I arrived to a warm welcome by one of the most interesting, focused, thoughtful and accomplished men I have met in a long time. A tour of his facility soon revealed a clinic that has been fine-tuned into an organization that understands the efficiency of collecting input and converting that input into products and services that deliver the best possible patient experience and outcome. Dr. Lane patiently described each piece of diagnostic equipment and how the flow of patients is all coordinated by a software program that he designed. Each staff member and each patient is tracked, moved and treated in what must look like a ballet of constant high-quality care.

After the tour of the clinic, Dr. Lane and I sat down for a wide-ranging conversation all about his past, present, future and personal sources of motivation. It was an enlightening look into the thoughts of a very successful and highly respected ophthalmologist. Dr. Lane agreed to answer the following.

### **What were the factors or main influences that led you to become an eye care professional?**

One of my first rotations, as a junior medical student, was in ophthalmology. I was fascinated by the highly specialized equipment and examination techniques.

As a medical student, I had a half-day a week of “independent study”, which I spent entirely in the ophthalmology clinics.

Ophthalmologists perform highly specialized operations, which no other physician group can perform... including the ability to restore sight. We are fortunate to have happy and grateful patients. What we do everyday, and the emotions to which we are constantly exposed affect the rest of our life. I am grateful to be able to do what I do.

### **Why did you choose to set up your practice in Lindsay, Ontario rather than a larger city such as Toronto?**

I wanted to do surgical retina and stay in Toronto, but my wife felt this would not be a wise idea for a good family life. She preferred to raise a family in a smaller town, so I obediently agreed to settle on Lindsay, Ontario. It was close enough for me to also work at Sunnybrook Hospital teaching residents, which I did for 10 years part time. Now that I know what I know, I would not trade Lindsay for anything. It offers a high quality of life and is close to Toronto and the airport. Also, there is a great need in this community for the services we offer and lastly, I have been fortunate to develop a great co-management relationship with optometry.



Dr. Lane practising a martial art kick.

### What are some the biggest changes you have witnessed in eye care health procedures over your career?

Advances in technology provide better outcomes for laser vision correction (LVC) and refractive cataract surgery (RCS).

For LVC there are now low energy bladeless femtosecond laser systems to make superior LASIK flaps. Also topography guided ablation, cyclotorsion tracking control and rapid eye tracking systems in new excimer lasers have been developed.

For RCS there are femtosecond lasers for capsulotomies, lens fragmentation, and intrastromal limbal incisions. Advancements have been made in IOLs (intraocular lens implants)... new EDOF (Extended depth of focus) implants to allow for a "range of clarity" without degrading quality of vision. This has been the driving force behind the recent large increase in clear lens extraction surgeries.

An expanding aging population has created pressure on services like ophthalmology to become more efficient. Public and private centres will need to learn to be efficient in order to service the growing needs of the population. For this to

happen you need an excellent team that communicates well and an EMR (electronic medical record) system with customized macros and software. Patients need to receive their diagnostics efficiently, be advised by an ophthalmic assistant, and then examined by me, so that most of the time is spent on discussing diagnosis and treatment options. Patients must leave the office with a feeling of having received exceptional care. To see over 100 per day in this manner is NOT easy... this is the biggest challenge.

### What changes (if any) would you like to see occur with regard to the delivery of eye health care?

I would like to see an expansion of private sector health care that provides more options for people who can afford to pay for services. This would relieve pressure on a burdened public system and reduce wait times in the public system.

### Describe a typical day for you.

My office day starts at 6 a.m. I begin by studying a foreign language, or working on practice management issues. At 7:30 a.m. we have an office meeting and at 8:00 a.m. patients start to come in. From

noon to 1:00 p.m. my staff and I have an office workout, followed by a smoothie. We have an afternoon clinic until 4:00 p.m., at which time the masseuse arrives for whomever needs her.

On a surgery day (at Lasik Cataract Centre), the routine at 6:00 a.m. remains the same but from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. I do refractive cataract surgery and from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. it's laser vision correction. If I am on call, I also do clinics on Saturday and Sundays.

### Do you have a favourite saying, mantra or quote that sums up how you approach your life and work?

Any person choosing to work hard must have a source of motivation... my approach is based on *Love and Family and Purpose in Process*. Most of us spend our waking hours at work—there must be purpose in everything that we do. This brings meaning and happiness to our lives. I try to avoid doing what does not have purpose. I believe in giving back, be it through philanthropy, teaching or volunteering.

I attribute some of my approach to life & work to my martial arts training. In North



Dr. Lane in a lunch time activity with staff



Dr. Lane in his clinic

American culture, many are too focused on immediate gratification. I am not someone focused on immediate returns... I am interested in providing my very best, fully in the moment, concentrating on improving the basics... the rest follows naturally.

**You are a very busy practitioner. What do you do to unwind?**

I have practised martial arts my whole life. I now enjoy working out with my staff. We close the office at lunchtime, move the chairs from the waiting room, and pump up the music volume. We have two different trainers come on different days—a fitness coach (weights, stretches, partner based exercises to music)—and a professional fighter who does Muay Thai classes with us (every staff member has their own set of boxing gloves). This creates a feeling of unity, energy, and positivity.

We take active family vacations like bareboating in the BVIs (British Virgin Islands) where I like to captain the boat. We have done rock climbing/canyoning in France. We plan to go to Whistler this Christmas and bareboating in French Polynesia in March to

hopefully scuba with wild dolphins and sharks in Rangiroa.

I love languages... and I will do my best to learn some of the basics of any

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language before we visit a new country. After a few months of early morning study, I arrange for a private tutor in Toronto... this makes a vacation to a new country FAR more interesting. (This is my retirement plan as well.)

**Where do you see yourself in five years time?**

Practising in Lindsay with an associate who is coming in August, 2019. In five years, I see myself doing purely a refractive practice (LASIK, PRK (Photorefractive keratectomy), and refractive cataract surgery).

**Any regrets or second thoughts about your career choice?**

NEVER... I truly consider myself fortunate for being able to do what I do. I never

tire of hearing grateful patients talk about how beautiful it is see so clearly again.

**Any final thoughts to add for our health care readers?**

Surround yourself with the right people and don't be afraid to make mistakes. Work hard with *purpose in process* as discussed earlier.

**BOTTOM LINE: A highly organized and successful ophthalmologist shares his career story and explains why he chose to practise in Lindsay, Ontario. ○**



**Dr. David Lane**

Dr. Lane has personally performed over 25,000 surgeries. He is well respected among his colleagues and has given many lectures about cataract surgery to other ophthalmologists. For

more information go to: [drdavidlane.com](http://drdavidlane.com) or call 705.320.8080.