A Retina Telemedicine Technique

I really appreciate all the leadership and advice that the Academy and Dr. Parke have provided during the COVID-19 crisis. I am an ophthalmologist and Academy member. Since I am in an increased risk group, I have limited my practice to telemedicine. I have developed a technique for patients to photograph their retina and optic nerve at home with just a smartphone and a $16 magnifier. The magnifier is a 20-D (6× magnification) low vision aid. This can be shipped to patients, and they can obtain a bottle of tropicamide for less than $10 (and have it delivered to them by a pharmacy). Therefore, the total cost with shipping for the magnifier and drops is approximately $30. This is invaluable for elderly patients or at-risk patients with macular degeneration who require monitoring by their ophthalmologist but are forced to stay home due to risk of contagion with COVID-19. It’s also useful for the monitoring of other retinal diseases and glaucoma. As an illustration, here are two images: The first photo (Fig. 1) is a patient with macular drusen; she took the photo at home while I talked her through it from my house. The second photo (Fig. 2) is my retina, which I photographed myself at home. A video to elucidate the procedure is forthcoming.

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