

Your Eye Elegance and Serendipity

By Don J. Fontana, MD

Serendipity is a wonderful word. Serendipity means the fortuitous discovery of something accidentally. It is not uncommon in medicine to discover a drug side effect that is useful for the treatment of some other condition. This is a serendipitous event. Such is the case for the medication Latisse™.

The chemical within Latisse™ has been used as eye drops by ophthalmologists for the treatment of glaucoma. Patients noted that with continued use of the eye drops that their eyelashes thickened and lengthened; a serendipitous event that women loved. After considerable study, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently gave approval for the use of the Latisse™ to be applied as a solution to the skin above the upper eyelashes giving the same results.

The condition of having thin, sparse eyelashes is called eyelash hypotrichosis. Latisse™ is applied

nightly to the skin of the upper eyelid margin at the base of the eyelashes. Just as hair grows at varying rates on the body, eyelashes grow particularly slowly. Studies indicate that patients “saw a significant improvement by two months.” Maximum benefit was seen after 16 weeks of treatment.

Since FDA approval, physicians can prescribe Latisse to patients after an appropriate exam. Mascara and other eyelid cosmetics can be used as well with Latisse™. Side effects are rare in less than 4% of the patients using Latisse™. The most common reported side effect is temporary eyelid itching and redness, eye redness and possible darkening of the skin of the upper eyelid margin.

The use of Latisse™ is effective for as long as the medication is used. For a real enhancement to your eyelashes and eye elegance, consider contacting your plastic surgeon for a consultation to determine if you are a candidate for Latisse™.



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Latisse™

