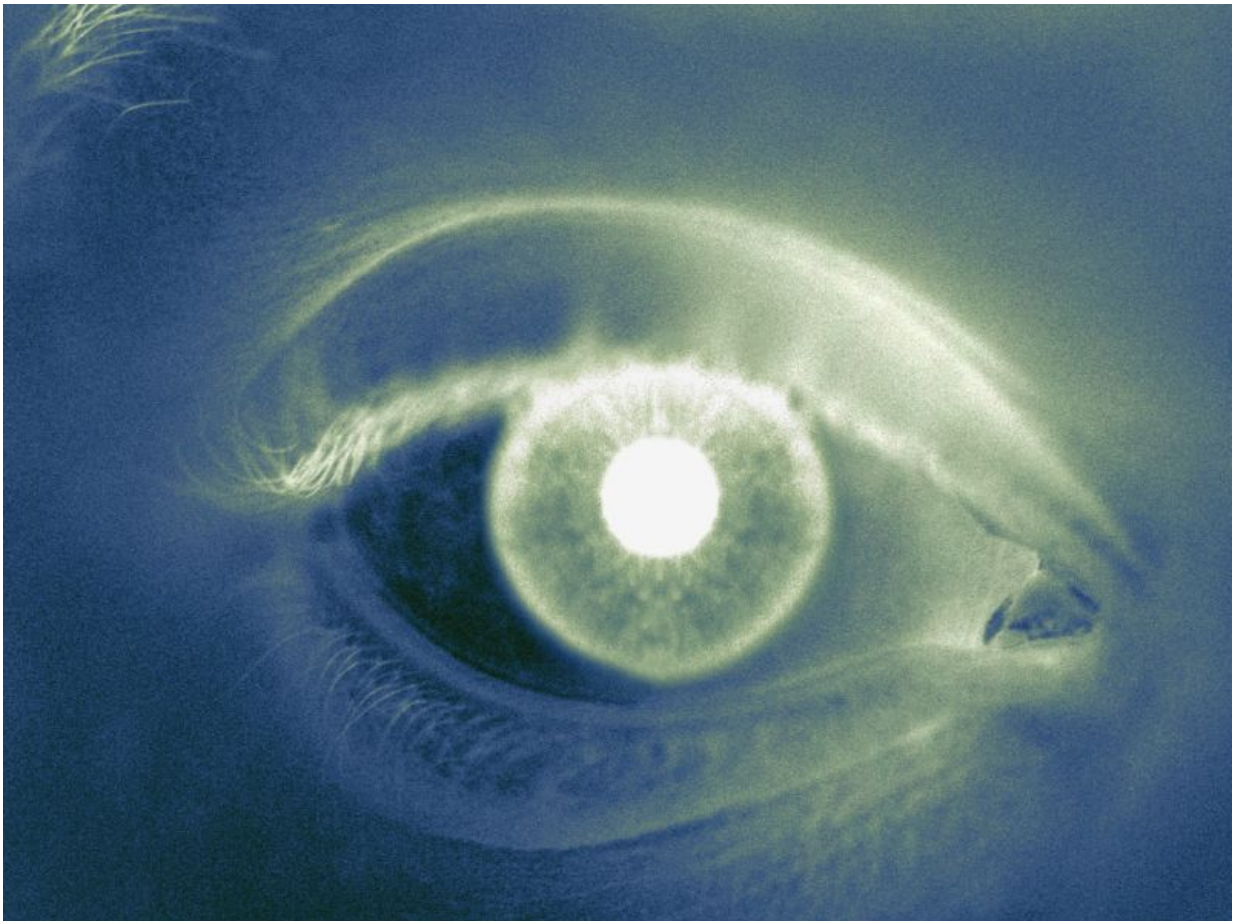


Pharmaceutical payments linked to anti-VEGF injection use

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(HealthDay)—There is a positive association between reported

pharmaceutical payments and use of aflibercept and ranibizumab injections among ophthalmologists who prescribe anti-vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) medications, according to a study published online June 23 in *JAMA Ophthalmology*.

Stanford C. Taylor, M.D., from Washington University in St. Louis, and colleagues examined the correlation between reported industry payments and physician-prescribing habits for anti-VEGF injections. Data were reviewed from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) 2013 Medicare Provider Utilization and Payment Data: Physician and Other Supplier Public Use File and the CMS-sponsored August-through-December-2013 Open Payments program.

The researchers found that in 2013, 3,011 U.S. ophthalmologists were reimbursed by CMS for 2.2 million anti-VEGF injections, of whom 38 percent received \$1.3 million in industry payments for ranibizumab and aflibercept. There were positive associations for increasing numbers of reported industry payments and total [injection](#) use, aflibercept and ranibizumab injection use, and the percentage of injections per physician that were aflibercept or ranibizumab. There was a smaller association between greater number of industry payments and bevacizumab injection use.

"As is inherent to the design of correlation studies, this analysis cannot determine whether the payments reported caused the increased use, are a result of the increased use, or are merely associated with some other factor that causes the increased use," the authors write.

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