

# **SOUTHWESTERN NEWS**

Media Contact: Reyes Abila  
(214) 648-3404  
e-mail: reyes.abila@email.swmed.edu

## **OPHTHALMOLOGY CHAIRMAN TO LEAD FDA PANEL**

DALLAS – May 13, 1998 – Dr. James McCulley, chairman of ophthalmology at UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, has been named chairman of the Food and Drug Administration's Ophthalmic Device Advisory Panel.

As chairman of the panel, of which McCulley has been a member since 1995, he leads a group of eight ophthalmologists and optometrists. Independent consultants also work with panel members, who, at the request of FDA officials, review the scientific and clinical validity of new commercial devices developed to treat various eye conditions.

"I'm honored and flattered, and I take the role of our panel very seriously," said McCulley, holder of the David Bruton Jr. Chair in Ophthalmology. "Our scientific advice affects the scientific field as well as the marketplace, so we have to be careful that the data that's presented to the committee demonstrates that the device under construction is effective in doing what it's purported to do and that it is safe."

Most recently, the panel has reviewed scientific data on the excimer laser vision-correction procedures, which can correct nearsightedness, farsightedness and astigmatism.

McCulley and the panel also are playing a vital role in developing guidelines that will be used to evaluate ultraextended-wear contact lenses, which can be worn for up to 30 days. Several key developments in the field of ophthalmology also are slated to come before the committee, including a new scanning-beam excimer laser that reshapes the cornea.

The panel meets in Washington, D.C., about four times each year.

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