Current glaucoma therapy is primarily focussed on the reduction of intraocular pressure, either by medical therapy, by laser or by surgical means. Hardly any other clinical center devoted to glaucoma research has contributed so much to our knowledge of the cellular pathomechanisms that lead to glaucomatous damage like the role of ocular blood flow, of vascular dysregulations, of the impact of free radicals as the University Eye Hospital in Basel, Switzerland. The clinic headed by Josef Flammer has for many years been a pioneer of treatment options that go beyond IOP reduction - like reducing photooxydative stress, treating nocturnal blood pressure dips, inhibiting the activation of astrocytes.

These measures take their rightful place among the more established therapeutic measures in the new book, published by the Basel Eye Clinic: Glaucoma Therapy: State of the Art is a synopsis of the latest of the renowned Basel Ophthalmo-Meetings, an annual convention that most recently was dedicated to glaucoma therapy. A wide range is covered, from an update on current medical therapy (by Norbert Pfeiffer, Mainz) to the different laser techniques and the numerous surgical options. Trabeculectomie might still be the gold standard but it increasingly has its competitors: Shunts may be relatively safe and effective even as primary surgery for primary glaucomas, as Keith Barton (London) points out, while for Robert Stegman “Schlemm’s canal surgery will continue to play an increasing role in the management of glaucoma as it is the most physiologic way to approach it.”

Glaucoma therapy will remain one of the most challenging tasks for the ophthalmologist - and at the same time promises new developments like those that have propelled glaucoma diagnostics, for the benefit of our patients, so impressively forward. The annual Basel meeting and the book series of which Glaucoma Therapy: State of the Art is the latest (it is not available in bookstores but is now on sale online) help to keep the audience and the readers in touch with a dynamic field of ophthalmology.

The book, self-published by the University Eye Hospital of Basel, can be ordered on the Internet: www.glaucoma-meeting.ch

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