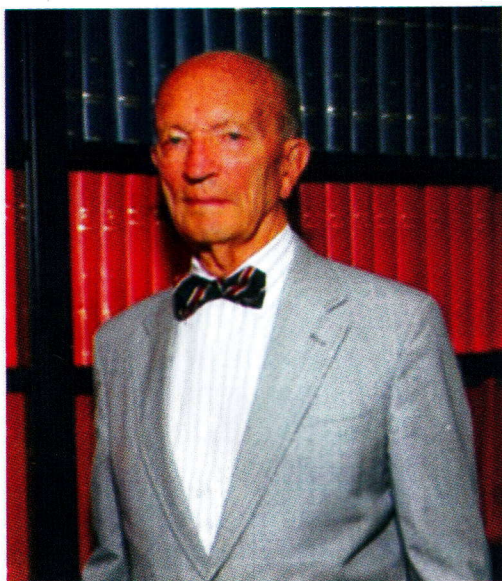


Charles L. Schepens

Charles L Schepens, long considered one of the giants of 20th Century ophthalmology and the unquestioned leader in retinal detachment surgery. Schepens was born in Moeskroen, Belgium in 1912, his father was a physician. Charles Schepens first obtained a certificate in mathematics at the University of Ghent. He would have used this to enter the engineering school, his preference, but bowing to peer pressure and family tradition, he entered the medical school. He earned his medical degree in 1936 and received surgery training at the City Hospital of Ghent.



Schepens then trained in ophthalmology at Moorfields Eye Hospital in London, England prior to World War II. After the Germans invaded Belgium in 1940, he became a medical officer in the Belgian Air Force. After the fall of Belgium, Schepens escaped to France where he became active in the French Resistance smuggling documents and people over the Pyrenees to Spain during 1942 and 1943. Schepens was twice captured by the Gestapo.

Pushpgiri Vitreo Retinal Institute
Hyderabad

While at Moorfields, working with Professor Ida Mann, Charles developed a prototype of the **binocular indirect ophthalmoscope**, which for the first time, allowed stereoscopic viewing of the eye fundus out to the peripheral retina.

The impact of Charles Schepens' contributions is immense. Before him no effective way to see the retinal periphery with an ophthalmoscope existed. The invention of the binocular indirect ophthalmoscope revolutionized ophthalmology.

The development of the indirect ophthalmoscope and the scleral buckling procedure brought the success rate for retinal reattachment surgery from 30% to 90%.

Finally, his insistence on assigning an equal value to education, research, and clinical practice pioneered an approach now so widespread that it is taken for granted. His strategy broadened and deepened the knowledge of the retina to a point that it became a subspecialty of its own.

Because of his remarkable leadership he is revered as **"The Father of Modern Retina Surgery."**

Dr. Charles L. Schepens, an eye researcher who developed sight-saving procedures and invented a device for viewing the retina that has, in turn, brought about new treatments to prevent blindness, died on March 28, 2006 at a hospital in Salem, Mass.

*Life is a chain. Our bodies fail and eventually have to rest for a very long time, but our beings and our work live on through our family, colleagues and friends - **Charles L Schepens.***

Shephali Jain