

Dr. Carl Claes graduated as ophthalmic surgeon in 1987 at the Antwerp University. After succeeding the American Medical Degree, he fulfilled a fellowship in Vitreoretinal Surgery at the Retina Foundation (director Charles Schepens) and Harvard Medical School. A second fellowship was accomplished in the Rotterdam Eye Hospital under the leadership of Relja Zivojnovic.

Dr. Carl Claes was the founder-director of the Vitreoretinal Department in AZ Middelheim Hospital and started the first complicated vitreoretinal procedures in the province and in the country outside an university setting.

Dr. Zivojnovic joined the team and this accelerated its grow in numbers and international referrals from all over Europe, North-Africa, the Middle East and beyond.

In close relationship with Dr. Zivojnovic, during nine years, thousands of Belgian and international patients were operated in the department, referred for the most advanced and rare pathologies.

In 1997 after Zivojnovic's retirement, Dr. Claes continued as head of VR-Surgery in AZ Middelheim.

Dr. Carl Claes is founder and organiser of the Advanced Vitreoretinal Course in Antwerp, since 1989, a bi-annual meeting for specialists, hosting over 300 participants from 35 countries.

14 editions have succesfully taken place.

Nowadays Dr. Claes is co-organiser of the bi-annual Floretina Meeting, the largest vitreoretinal surgery meeting in the world , hosting over 3000 vitreoretinal surgeons from 120 countries.

Live surgery sessions are the hallmark of the meeting.

In 2005 Dr. Claes moved to the St.-Augustinus Hospital as founder and head of the department of Vitreoretinal Surgery to continue improvements and development of techniques, as well as educating young specialist from all over the world, countries like Belgium, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Syria, Thailand, Jordan, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Ukraine, Greece, Turkey, Spain, Bulgaria, United Kingdom, Brasil, Argentina, Chile, Japan, USA, Canada and many more.

Currently Dr. Claes is active at the University Hospital of Antwerp, teaching and expanding the department of Vitreoretinal Surgery.

Dr. Claes has presented over 500 invited lectures in conferences in five continents.

He has performed live surgery demonstrations during congresses showing extreme complex cases and new techniques and instrumentation in 8 different European countries on many occasions, as well as in the Middle East, South America, Asia and Africa.

He has shared his extensive experience in many book chapters and several scientific publications in top ranked scientific journals.

Currently Dr. Claes is a reviewer for different highly ranked ophthalmology journals (Retina, Ophthalmology, European Journal of Ophthalmology and more).

Dr. Claes is active in different advisory boards of medical companies contributing to development of pharmaceutical and instrumental advancements.

In collaboration with different medical companies, he designed many new instruments, equipment and techniques contributing to the development of modern vitreoretinal surgery.

Therefor he was honored with several international awards, such as :

Belgian selection Award Rome SOE 1985

Honor Award Greek Retina Society 2010

Nataraja Pillai Award Indian VR Society 2011

Member Hall of Fame Retina Specialists 2015

Senior Achievement Award American Academy of Ophthalmology 2015

Membership of the American Society of Retina Surgeons for contributions in VR surgery 2016.

Dr. Claes owns memberships in the following societies :

American Academy of Ophthalmology

Club Jules Gonin

European Retina Society

Société Belge d'Ophtalmologie

American Society of Retina Surgeons
Honorary Member of Tunisian Society
Honorary Member Romanian Society
Honorary Member Brazilian Society
Member advisory board Schepens Society
Instructor European School Advanced Studies in Ophthalmology.

Dr. Claes practises in Antwerp, Belgium.

- Medical director Antwerp Eye Care
- Head VR Surgery St.-Augustinus
- Head VR Surgery University Hospital Antwerp

He also practises in 4 European Countries and has numerous international referrals in complicated retinal detachments, trauma, proliferative diabetic retinopathy, retinopathy of prematurity, proliferative vitreoretinopathy, macular translocations, pigment epithelial transplantsations and pediatric diseases.

Dr. Carl Claes has performed over 24000 intraocular operations up to date.