# Vision Effects on the Quality of Life

## Why Your Vision is Important

Sight is one of our most valued senses. The majority of knowledge we have about the world around us comes through our eyes. Even though most people recognize how precious sight is, many are not taking the necessary steps to have optimal vision and to protect their eye health.

## Issues due to Reduced Vision

Reduced vision can result in social isolation, depression, increased risk of falling and accidents, and ultimately a greater tendency to be disabled. It is important for you to visit your eye care professional for annual comprehensive eye exams to ensure not only optimal vision, but your health and safety as well.

## Know Your Options

There are many options available to you when it comes to VISION CORRECTION. We recommend consulting your eye care professional for the best vision correction solution for you.

## Did you know?

- More than 12 million Indians are blind or visually impaired and many more are at risk of preventable vision loss.

- Vision disability is one of the top ten disabilities among adults 18 years and over.

- Proper refractive correction could IMPROVE VISION for over 20 million indians, 12 years and older.

## How to Keep Your Eyes Healthy

Many of us tend to take our eyes and sight for granted. But regular eye maintenance is key to enjoying a lifetime of HEALTHY vision. Find out what you can do to ensure your eyes perform at their best.

There are some ways to ensure eye HEALTH and a lifetime of healthy vision.

**You are what you eat**
Eating healthy is necessary for a strong body, but certain foods can help keep eyes healthy

too. The antioxidants in coffee are beneficial to eye health as well as eggs, leafy greens, berries and cold-water fish such as salmon. The omega-3 fatty acids helps prevent dry eyes and keep the retina healthy.

**Protect yourself**
90% of sports-related injuries affect the eyes? Any type of safety eyewear will protect the eyes — sunglasses, safety glasses, eye guards and safety shields. If playing outside in the sun it is important to wear protective lenses or goggles that have UV protection.

**Doctor knows best**
When it comes to eye HEALTH, one of the greatest ways to protect yourself is with regular, comprehensive eye exams. Compared to a vision screening that only tests vision for acuity, a comprehensive eye exam checks for acuity as well as overall eye HEALTH.

**The magic isn't in the makeup**
Makeup is necessary sometimes, but sleeping with it on is not. For example, allergic reactions, dry eyes, loss of eyelashes, toxic heavy metals and bacterial infections can occur if makeup is not removed and builds up. Removing that old mascara, eye shadow or eyeliner not only promotes eye health, but is good for your skin too. Out of makeup remover? Try using avocado.

**Just walk away**
"Computer vision syndrome" and digital eye strain are very real and affect 75% of computer workers, leading to muscular strain, muscular stress and eye discomfort. Wearing computer glasses, taking a break, magnifying text, blinking frequently and making sure the screen is 20-28 inches away are all ways to prevent computer vision syndrome.

# Vision Basics

Sometimes, the simplest steps we take toward caring for something are also the best. It's certainly true for our eyes and vision. In this section you can learn the basic steps needed to keep you and your family's sight in tip-top shape at every age.

# Yearly Maintenance

Most people know the value of getting their car tuned up every year. And they realize that for healthy teeth they should visit their dentist annually. Yet many of the same people put off going to the eye doctor because they don't recognize how important an annual eye exam is for maintaining clear vision and overall health.

Good visual health is critical to your quality of life. It allows you to see the world around you and enjoy everyday activities like driving, reading, watching TV and playing sports. More than 20 million Indians have an uncorrected visual impairment that can impact their quality of life, and in some cases lead to more serious eye conditions. That's why it is important to see an eye doctor regularly.

# Why Are Eye Exams Important?

Regardless of your age or physical health, it's important to have regular eye exams.

During a complete eye exam, your eye doctor will not only determine your prescription for eyeglasses or contact lenses, but will also check your eyes for common eye diseases, assess how your eyes work together as a team and evaluate your eyes as an indicator of your overall health.

## Who should get their eyes examined?

Eye examinations are an important part of health maintenance for everyone. Adults should have their eyes tested to keep their prescriptions current and to check for early signs of eye disease. For children, eye exams can play an important role in normal development.

Vision is closely linked to the learning process. Children who have trouble seeing or interpreting what they see will often have trouble with their schoolwork. Many times, children will not complain of vision problems simply because they don't know what "normal" vision looks like. If your child performs poorly at school or exhibits a reading or learning problem, be sure to schedule an eye examination to rule out an underlying visual cause.

## What is the eye doctor checking for?

In addition to evaluating whether you have nearsightedness, farsightedness or astigmatism, your eye doctor will check your eyes for eye diseases and other problems that could lead to

vision loss. Here are some examples of the conditions that your eye doctor will be looking for:

- **Amblyopia:** This occurs when the eyes are misaligned or when one eye has a much different prescription than the other. The brain will "shut off" the image from the turned or blurry eye. If left untreated, amblyopia can stunt the visual development of the affected eye, resulting in permanent vision impairment. Amblyopia is often treated by patching the stronger eye for periods of time.

- **Strabismus:** Strabismus is defined as crossed or turned eyes. Your eye doctor will check your eyes' alignment to be sure that they are working together. Strabismus causes problems with depth perception and can lead to amblyopia.

- **Eye Diseases:** Many eye diseases, such as glaucoma and diabetic eye disease, have no obvious symptoms in their early stages. Your eye doctor will check the health of your eyes inside and out for signs of early problems. In most cases, early detection and treatment of eye diseases can help reduce your risk for permanent vision loss.

- **Other Diseases:** Your eye doctor can detect early signs of some systemic conditions and diseases by looking at your eye's blood vessels, retina and so forth. They may be able to tell you if you are developing high blood pressure, high cholesterol or other problems.

  For example, diabetes can cause small blood vessel leaks or bleeding in the eye, as well as swelling of the macula (the most sensitive part of the retina), which can lead to vision loss. It's estimated that one-third of Americans who have diabetes don't know it; your eye doctor may detect the disease before your primary care physician does, especially if you're overdue for a physical.

# What's the difference between a vision screening and a complete eye exam?

Vision screenings are general eye tests that are meant to help identify people who are at risk for vision problems. Screenings include brief vision tests performed by a school nurse, pediatrician or volunteers. The eye test you take when you get your driver's license renewed is another example of a vision screening.

A vision screening can indicate that you need to get an eye exam, but it does not serve as a substitute for a comprehensive eye exam.

A comprehensive eye examination is performed by an eye doctor and will involve careful testing of all aspects of your vision. Based upon the results of your exam, your doctor will then recommend a treatment plan for your individual needs. Remember, only an eye doctor can provide a comprehensive eye exam. Most family physicians and pediatricians are not fully trained to do this, and studies have shown that they can miss important vision problems that require treatment.

Treatment plans can include eyeglasses or contact lenses, EYE EXERCISES or surgery for muscle problems, medical treatment for eye disease or simply a recommendation that you have your eyes examined again in a specified period of time.

No matter who you are, regular eye exams are important for seeing more clearly, learning more easily and preserving your vision for life.

# A "Healthy Diet" for Good Vision

According to the Dietary Guidelines, a healthful diet:



- Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products.
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs and nuts.
- Is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium) and added sugars.

But it's common knowledge that most of us don't eat enough fruits, vegetables and other nutrient-rich foods, opting instead for high-calorie, low-nutrient alternatives that can be harmful to the body, including the eyes.

Taking a daily multivitamin and mineral supplement can help fill in the nutritional gaps in a less-than-optimal diet and may help protect you from degenerative diseases, including eye diseases such as macular degeneration and cataracts.

## Eye Health Myths

The health of the eyes is just as important as the health of the heart, skin, brain and bones. With so many myths out there, how can you be sure you're getting the right information about foods and vitamins for eye health? Here are some facts about foods good for eye health, and facts about some common misconceptions.

**Nuts** – The vitamin E found in almonds, peanuts, cashews and other nuts is found to protect the eye's cells from free radicals that can break down the eye's healthy tissue.

**Orange juice** – Vitamin C is a major component that promotes healthy eyes because it keeps the blood vessels healthy and can lower the risk of developing cataracts.

**Spinach** – This eye vitamin superfood contains vitamin C, beta-carotene and two other nutrients that protect the eyes from harmful blue light, and can lessen the risk of macular degeneration and cataracts.

**Salmon** – The DHA, or fatty acids, found in many types of fish can prevent dry eye syndrome.

**Red meat** – Zinc is a great vitamin for eye health because it delivers vitamin A to the retina from the liver, producing melanin that protects the eye's pigment. The lack of zinc can lead to problems in vision including cataracts and night vision issues.

**Carrots** – Carrots do contain the beneficial nutrient, vitamin A, but do not have an overall affect of [IMPROVING VISION](#)

Making these foods a part of your daily diet can help support your eyes and are a delicious way to ensure you're getting the best vitamins for eye health.

Some myths surrounding eye health include the dangers of sitting too close to the TV, crossing your eyes and reading in the dark. While none of these things are good for your eyes, they won't negatively affect the overall health of the eyes. The eyes have a way of "bouncing back" thanks to human development and a complex set of eye muscles that keep everything in check.

# HEALTH TIPS

You can help keep your eyes healthier by eating foods that are rich in certain vitamins and nutrients. Colorful fruits and vegetables that are bursting with Vitamin A, C, D, E, beta-carotene and zinc will give your eyes a healthy boost.  Omega-3 fatty acids from fish and flavonoids from tea, red wine and berries are great, too!