Healthy Vision: Make It Last a Lifetime [1]

Education & Awareness [2]

To keep your eyes healthy, get a comprehensive dilated eye exam: if you haven't had a comprehensive dilated eye exam for some time, schedule one now.

Taking care of your eyes is a priority just like eating well and being physically active. Healthy vision can help keep you safe and healthy. To keep your eyes healthy, get a comprehensive dilated eye exam: an eye care professional will use drops to widen the pupils to check for common vision problems and eye diseases. It's the best way to find out if you need glasses or contacts, or are in the early stages of an eye disease.

Vision Health for All Ages

You can have a dilated eye exam regularly to check for common eye problems. If you haven't had an exam for some time, schedule one this month. Don't forget to take care of your children's eyes as well.

Although older adults tend to have more vision problems, preschoolers may not see as well as they should.

Know your family's eye health history.

Practice workplace eye safety, and wear protective eye wear when playing sports or doing activities around the home.

- Although older adults tend to have more vision problems, preschoolers may also not see as well as they should.
- The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends [3] vision screening for all children aged 3 to 5 years to find conditions such as amblyopia, or lazy eye, which can be treated effectively if caught early.

Some eye conditions can cause vision loss and even blindness. These include:

- **Cataracts** [4], a clouding of the eye.
- Diabetic retinopathy, which causes damage to the blood vessels in the back of the eye.
- **Glaucoma** [5], damage to the optic nerve, often with increased eye pressure.
• **Age-related macular degeneration** [6], which gradually affects central vision.

Other eye conditions, such as refractive errors, which happen when the shape of your eye doesn't bend light correctly, are common problems easily corrected with glasses, contact lenses, or laser surgery. An estimated 11 million Americans aged 12 years and older could see better if they used corrective lenses, or had eye surgery, if appropriate.

**Nine ways you can help protect your vision**

1. Get regular comprehensive dilated eye exams.
2. Know your family's eye health history. It's important to know if anyone has been diagnosed with an eye disease or condition, since some are hereditary.
3. Eat right to protect your sight. In particular, eat plenty of dark leafy greens such as spinach, kale, or collard greens, and fish that is high in omega-3 fatty acids such as salmon, albacore tuna, trout, and halibut.
4. Maintain a healthy weight.
5. Wear protective eyewear when playing sports or doing activities around the home, such as painting, yard work, and home repairs.
6. Quit smoking or never start.
7. Wear sunglasses that block 99 percent-100 percent of ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) radiation.
8. Wash your hands before taking out your contacts and cleanse your contact lenses [7] properly to avoid infection.
9. Practice workplace eye safety.

**Eyes and Overall Health**

Taking care of your eyes also may benefit your overall health. People with vision problems [8] are more likely than those with good vision to have diabetes [9], poor hearing, heart problems, high blood pressure, lower back pain and strokes, as well as have increased risk for falls, injury and depression. Among people aged 65 and older, more than 50 percent of those who are blind, and more than 40 percent of those with impaired vision say their overall health is fair or poor. But more than 20 percent of older Americans without vision problems reported fair to poor health.

In addition to your comprehensive dilated eye exams, visit an eye care professional if you have:

• Decreased vision.
• Eye pain.
• Drainage or redness of the eye.
• Double vision.
Diabetes and Your Eyes

If you have diabetes, there's a lot you can do to prevent eye problems. Keeping your blood glucose under control can prevent or delay the onset of diabetic eye diseases. Keeping your blood pressure under control is also important.

Diabetic retinopathy (as noted above) is a common complication of diabetes and usually affects both eyes. It is the leading cause of blindness in American adults. Early diagnosis of diabetic retinopathy and timely treatment reduce the risk of vision loss; however, as many as 50 percent of patients are not getting their eyes examined or are diagnosed too late for treatment to be effective. Finding and treating eye problems early can help save your sight.

For this Healthy Vision Month and always, take care of your eyes to make them last a lifetime.

Disclaimer:

More Information

- CDC's Vision Health Initiative
- Extra Eye Health Tips
- Answers to Frequently Asked Vision Questions
- Keeping Your Eyes Healthy if You Have Diabetes
- Healthy Contact Lens Wear and Care
- What Eye Care Professionals Would Like Team Members to Know About Eye Health and Diabetes

Tags:

Education & Awareness

Source URL: https://www.alcon.com/stories/healthy-vision-lifetime

Links
