

Keeping Your Eyes Healthy



Looking After Your Eye Health

Your eyes help you experience the world—seeing colors, faces, and everything around you. Taking good care of them is an important part of staying healthy. Just like you visit your doctor for check-ups, your eyes need regular attention, too.



Why Eye Health Matters

Your eyes are made up of many delicate parts that work together to help you see clearly. Over time, these parts can change due to age, health conditions, or lifestyle factors. Problems like **dry eyes, cataracts, glaucoma, or diabetes** could affect your sight. But many of these issues can be caught early—or even prevented—through good eye care habits.



Get Regular Eye Exams

One of the best ways to look after your eyes is to have regular eye exams. Even if your vision seems fine, some eye diseases develop slowly and don't cause symptoms at first. During an eye exam, your optometrist will check how well you see, look for signs of eye disease, and make sure your glasses or contact lens prescription is up to date.

- **Adults should have a full eye exam at least every two years.**
- After age 40, your eye doctor may recommend more frequent visits.
- If you have diabetes, high blood pressure, or a family history of eye disease, you may need eye exams more often.



Protect Your Eyes from the Sun

Just like your skin, your eyes can be damaged by the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays. Over time, too much UV exposure can **increase the risk of cataracts** and other eye conditions.

To protect your eyes:

- Wear sunglasses that block 100% of UVA and UVB rays whenever you're outdoors.
- A wide-brimmed hat can give extra protection.
- Remember that UV rays can pass through clouds, so sunglasses are helpful even on cloudy days.



Eat for Healthy Eyes

A balanced diet is good for your whole body, including your eyes. Certain vitamins and nutrients help keep your vision sharp and reduce the risk of eye disease.

Try to include:

Leafy greens like spinach, kale, and collard greens (rich in lutein and zeaxanthin).

Colorful fruits and vegetables such as carrots, oranges, bell peppers (high in vitamins A and C), and dark berries such as blueberry and acai.

Fish like salmon, tuna, or sardines (high in omega-3 fatty acids, which help prevent dry eyes).

Nuts and seeds (a good source of vitamin E).

Drinking plenty of water helps keep your eyes hydrated, too.



Give Your Eyes a Break from Screens

Many people spend hours each day looking at computers, phones, or tablets. Staring at screens for too long **can cause eye strain, headaches, and dry eyes.**

Follow the 20-20-20 rule:

Every 20 minutes, look at something at least 20 feet (6m) away for at least 20 seconds.

Also, make sure the top of your screen is at eye level, reduce glare with good lighting, and blink often to keep your eyes moist. Drink plenty of water to keep hydrated.



Avoid Smoking and Manage Health Conditions

Smoking increases the risk of serious eye problems, including **cataracts and macular degeneration**. Quitting smoking—at any age—can help protect your eyes and improve your overall health.

If you have diabetes, high blood pressure, or high cholesterol, managing these conditions can also protect your eyesight. These health problems can damage blood vessels in the eyes over time.

Keep Your Eyes Clean and Safe

If you wear contact lenses, **always wash your hands before touching them**, follow cleaning instructions carefully, and never sleep with them in, unless your doctor says it's okay.

When doing outdoor work, using power tools, or playing sports like paintball, squash or padel, always **wear protective eyewear** to prevent injuries.



In Summary

Like the rest of your body, your eyes need care and mindfulness.

By having regular eye exams, wearing sunglasses, eating nutritious foods, giving your eyes breaks from screens, and avoiding smoking, you can keep your vision clear and your eyes comfortable for years to come.

Remember: good habits today mean better vision tomorrow!