



PLATINUM
HEALTH



Eye Health and maintaining good eyesight

September is Eye Care Awareness Month to raise awareness about the importance of eye health, specifically around the prevention and treatment of avoidable blindness.

75% of all cases of blindness is avoidable either through prevention or through treatment – which is why it is important to get your eyes tested at least once every two years.



Near-sightedness

Objects close by are clear and in focus but everything far away looks blurred and hazy.

How can it be corrected?

With glasses or contact lenses. Laser surgery can enable people with a low degree of nearsightedness to stop using their spectacles or contact lenses while people who are badly near-sighted may afterwards be less dependent on them. Laser surgery can be done only once the condition has stabilised, usually after the age of 18.



Do you see floaters?

Floaters are specks that drift across your field of vision. They can look like spots, threads, squiggly lines, or even little cobwebs. The problem is caused by small particles in the transparent jelly-like fluid that fills your eye. Floaters are mostly harmless but contact your doctor within 24 hours if they suddenly increase, if you see flashes of light or if it looks as if a curtain is coming down over your field of vision. It could be a retinal tear or a detached retina, both serious problems.



Eat for Good Vision

Protecting your eyes start with the food on your plate. Nutrients such as omega-3 fatty acids, lutein, zinc, and vitamins C and E might help ward off age-related vision problems such as macular degeneration and cataracts, dry eyes, glaucoma and poor night vision studies show.



Cataracts

Slowly but surely your vision becomes more and more blurred. It's like looking through a dirty camera lens. Colours become increasingly dull and it's more difficult to distinguish between colours and lighter and darker areas. Night driving also becomes more difficult because of a halo around the headlights of oncoming traffic. Some people also experience double vision. People with cataracts find they need more light for reading as well as stronger reading glasses.

How can it be corrected?

Surgery is the only effective treatment. The cloudy lens is removed and replaced with a new plastic lens. If your quality of life starts suffering - if, for example, you can't drive anymore - it's usually time to have the cataract removed.



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Diabetic retinopathy

Often there are no early warning signs. As time passes the sufferer develops night blindness. Images become unfocused and a dark spot develops in the middle of the field of vision with floaters "cobwebs" seemingly drifting around. Diabetic retinopathy can lead to serious loss of sight and even blindness if it's not treated early enough. It's therefore essential that diabetics visit an ophthalmologist once a year.

How can it be corrected?

By means of laser therapy, injections into the eye and even the replacement of eye moisture. But prevention is best so good diabetic control is essential.

Regularly eating these foods can help lead to good eye health:

- Green, leafy vegetables such as spinach, kale, and collards.
- Salmon, tuna, and other oily fish.
- Eggs, nuts, beans, and other non-meat protein sources.
- Oranges and other citrus fruits or juices.
- Oysters and pork.

Eating a well-balanced diet also helps you maintain a healthy weight, which makes you less likely to get obesity-related diseases such as type 2 diabetes. Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness in adults.



Quit Smoking

Smoking makes you more likely to get cataracts, optic nerve damage, and macular degeneration.



Wear Sunglasses

The right kind of sunglasses will help protect your eyes from the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays. Too much UV exposure makes you more likely to get cataracts and macular degeneration. Choose sunglasses that block 99% to 100% of both UVA and UVB rays. For example polarized sunglasses.



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