

Top 10 Tips for Healthy Eyes



1. Stop Smoking

If you smoke, stop. Smoking significantly increases the risk of developing cataract and Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD). However long you have smoked it's never too late to benefit from quitting and reducing your risk.



2. Eat Healthily

Maintain a healthy diet; lacking antioxidant vitamins like A and C is a risk factor for both cataract and AMD. Include lots of omega-3, found in oily fish, in your diet.



3. Nutritional Supplements

Consider nutritional supplements particularly with a family history of AMD. Some are specifically designed for eye health are found in opticians, pharmacies and health shops. Flaxseed and evening primrose oil may also help dry eye sufferers.



4. Wear Sunglasses

Ultraviolet (UV) is a risk factor for cataract and AMD. Exposure when young does most harm, so protect children with sunglasses as well as a hat and sun block. Always wear sunglasses marked BS EN 1836 to ensure good UV protection. UV absorbing lenses can also be added to your everyday glasses.



5. Avoid Dry Eyes

With reduced tears eyes become dry and sore. Central heating, air conditioning and computer use, can make it worse. Around 15% of adults over the age of 40 suffer; twice as many women as men. Lubricating eye drops can soothe irritation and reduce discomfort.



6. Research Your Family History

Many eye conditions run in families, from simple long and short sight to more serious diseases like glaucoma. Knowledge of "problems" with sight can help detect a condition before it becomes serious.



7. Wear Prescribed Spectacles

Contrary to the myth, wearing spectacles and contact lenses doesn't make your eyesight worse. Many eye and vision problems develop or increase as we age. Corrective lenses will help eyes work more efficiently and won't make things worse.



8. Have Regular Sight Tests

Eye tests don't just pick up eye problems but general health problems like high blood pressure and diabetes as well. Some potentially blinding conditions such as glaucoma don't cause symptoms so vision could be lost without you realising. It's recommended that you have a sight test at least every two years.



9. Take Regular Breaks

Managing workplace tasks, particularly close focussing, is important. Eye muscles are active which can cause tiredness and headaches even in those with normal sight. Let your eyes relax every hour or so; look across the office or out of a window.



10. Better Safe Than Sorry

The sudden onset of symptoms like blurred vision, flashing lights, floaters or eye pain might, in rare cases, indicate a problem which needs treating. Most eye problems, if detected early, won't cause unnecessary loss of vision. So have a check as soon as possible.