



Vision Care THROUGH THE AGES

From birth through old age, taking care of your eyes is a priority.

Aging brings big changes to vision for kids and adults alike. The best way to care for your vision health is to consult with your optometrist and get regular vision exams - but knowing the general vision changes associated with growing up and aging can go a long way!

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Babies



Babies' vision begins to develop as soon as they are born. The ability to focus their eyes, move them, and use them together as a team all have to be learned over time. Some children develop vision skills more quickly than others - but make sure to take the time to identify your baby's progress and be proud!

FIRST EYE EXAM

Taking your baby to the eye doctor may not be top-of-mind with the many other appointments on your calendar. However, the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) recommends that babies see a doctor of optometry shortly after they turn six months old.



VISUAL DEVELOPMENT

Birth To 4 Months Old

Their primary focus is on objects eight to ten inches from their face and they intently look at highly contrasted objects.

5 To 8 Months Old

The baby's control of their eye movements improve and their depth perception begins to develop. At this stage they start seeing the world in 3-D for the first time!

9 to 12 Months Old

They should be able to grab objects and start learning hand-eye coordination. They also start to judge distance fairly well at this stage.

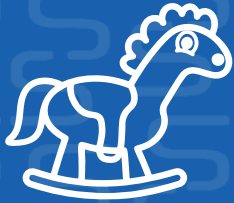
One to Two Years Old

By two years old, their hand-eye coordination and depth perception should be well developed. They should also be able to recognize familiar objects like pictures.



IMPROVE VISUAL DEVELOPMENT

- Use dim lighting in babies' rooms
- Hang a mobile or various objects across the crib for baby to see and grab
- Play games that include movement like rolling a ball or patty cake to practice hand-eye coordination
- Play hide and seek games to practice visual memory
- Read books to stimulate the child's ability to visualize the words and improve reading skills



Preschoolers

From two to five years old, a child will be fine-tuning the visual abilities gained during infancy and developing some new ones. Vision is used to guide all learning experiences.

EYE EXAM

A vision screening by a child's pediatrician or at preschool is not the same as a comprehensive eye and vision examination by an optometrist. Between three and five years old, your child should have an eye exam to make sure their vision is developing properly and no evidence of eye disease.



School exams are only half the battle when it comes to testing your child's vision



SIGNS OF VISION PROBLEMS

According to the American Public Health Association, about ten percent of preschoolers have eye or vision problems. Watch for common signs of vision problems, including:

- Sitting close to the TV or holding a book really close
- Covering one of their eyes
- Sensitivity to light
- Tilting their head
- Eye rubbing
- Hand-eye coordination issues when playing
- Avoiding colorful/detailed activities or games



IMPROVE VISUAL DEVELOPMENT

Playing with other children, playtime activities, and toys help stimulate the process of vision development. Activities that help your preschooler successfully develop their visual skills include:

- Throwing or catching a ball
- Reading to your child while they follow along
- Playing memory games
- Providing colorful arts and crafts supplies like chalk, paints, and crayons
- Encouraging playtime with other children
- Making time for outside play



School-Age Children & Teens



As kids grow up their vision is crucial for completing homework, reading, studying, and everyday life. It's crucial their vision development stays on track so their education and after-school activities don't suffer.

BACK TO SCHOOL EYE EXAM

A comprehensive eye examination is as essential for back-to-school success as school supplies. Vision can change frequently during the school year, so it is important to schedule an eye exam every year. Some common vision problems for school-age children and teenagers include nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism resulting in blurry vision.



EYE PROTECTION

Signs of under-performance during sports activities may indicate vision problems. Vision therapy can correct many vision problems, enhance vision skills, and improve sports vision performance. Eye protection is crucial to protect your child's eyes from injuries during sports. So be sure to invest in high-quality eye protection - and make them wear it!



SIGNS OF VISION PROBLEMS

Learning can be stressful and difficult when certain visual skills do not develop properly. A child may not tell you or know that they have a vision problem. Signs that may indicate vision problems include:

- Short attention span or inattentiveness
- Covering an eye
- Frequent eye rubbing
- Complaints of discomfort and fatigue
- Holding reading materials close to face
- Seeing double
- Tilting head
- Headaches



Adults



Most adults between nineteen and forty years old have healthy eyes and good vision, but stress and eye injuries can cause vision problems. It is important to maintain a healthy lifestyle and protect your eyes to avoid vision problems.

ANNUAL EYE EXAM

Even though vision remains stable during these years, problems may develop without any signs. Schedule an annual comprehensive eye exam to avoid any vision problems before they develop. The American Optometric Association recommends that adults receive an eye exam at least every two years. In between exams, contact your eye doctor if you notice a change in your vision. Detecting and treating problems early can help keep your vision healthy for the rest of your life.



MAINTAIN HEALTHY EYES

- Protect your eyes from light by wearing glasses with lens that block bright light
- Protect your eyes from the sun by wearing sunglasses that have UV protection to avoid exposure to ultraviolet sun rays
- Don't smoke. Smoking exposes your eyes to chemicals that increase the risk of cataracts
- Choose antioxidant-rich foods and maintain a healthy diet
- Exercise! It increases oxygen levels in your eyes and helps remove toxins



EYE PROTECTION

Whether you are at work, home, or playing sports, make sure you are wearing the proper eye protection for the eye hazards you're likely to be exposed to.



VISUAL STRESS

Eyestrain is common in today's visually demanding world, especially during computer-related work. Minimize visual stress to avoid future vision problems. Use proper lighting, take breaks from the screen, and maintain proper posture to help eyestrain. Consider investing in a pair of blue-light filtered lenses to lower eye-strain when you are at the computer, too.



Older Adults



As you reach your sixties and beyond, be aware of the warning signs for age-related health problems - especially those that can lead to vision loss. Healthy lifestyle choices, regular eye exams, and early detection of disease can improve your chances of maintaining good vision health as you age.

ANNUAL EYE EXAM

It is even more important as you reach your senior years to schedule regular eye exams. The American Optometric Association recommends annual eye examinations for everyone over sixty years old. See your Optometrist immediately if you notice any changes in your vision.



VISION DISORDERS

There are a number of eye diseases that can develop as you age. The earlier these problems are detected and treated, the more likely you can retain good vision. Vision disorders to be aware of:

- Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is an eye disease that affects the macula (the center of the light-sensitive retina at the back of the eye) and causes central vision loss
- Cataracts are cloudy or opaque areas in the normally clear lens of the eye
- Diabetic retinopathy is a condition that occurs in people with diabetes. It damages the blood vessels that nourish the retina
- Dry eye is a condition where a person produces too few or poor-quality tears
- Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases characterized by damage to the optic nerve resulting in loss of peripheral (side) vision
- Retinal detachment is a tearing or separation of the retina from an underlying medical issue



DRIVING

Driving safety can be compromised by age-related vision changes. Stay safe by taking extra caution at intersections. Reduce your speed and limit yourself to daytime driving. Avoid eye wear that effects your side vision.

VISION LOSS

Unfortunately, some people over sixty lose sight beyond normal, age-related vision changes. An Optometrist or Ophthalmologist can help by planning low-vision rehabilitative services that can help older adults learn on techniques to help perform daily activities with their remaining vision. Rehabilitation options include:

- Spectacle-mounted magnifiers are hands-free magnifying lens that mount directly to your eye wear
- Handheld or spectacle-mounted telescopes are the same idea, but for long distance vision
- Handheld and stand magnifiers are hand-held devices for short-term reading needs
- CCTVs/Video Magnifiers project magnified imagery for electronic devices



Taking care of your vision health is an investment in your overall health, no matter what stage of life you're in.

So start taking care of your eyes today!



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