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Keeping you and your eyes healthy for longer

There are a number of positive steps that you can take that'll help you enjoy good vision for longer.

Get your eyes regularly checked

Having your eyes regularly checked, at least once every two years, is an important part of maintaining eye health. A number of eye conditions can be detected through an eye test before they can seriously affect your vision. Even if your eyes don't feel any different, it's worth having a regular check-up because your eyes can actually tell us a lot about your general health.

Be aware of changes in your sight

Changes in your vision like struggling to see close-up or far away, difficulty judging the depth of steps, or colours looking washed out, are signs that you should see an optometrist. Intervening early, particularly with degenerative diseases like glaucoma, increases the likelihood of successful treatment.

Know your roots

If your family has a history of diabetes, glaucoma or high blood pressure, your risk of eye problems may be higher. Knowing your family history and telling your optometrist allows them to put in place additional checks to monitor your eye health.

Protect your eyes

Wearing sunglasses when the sun's bright, even in winter months, will help reduce the likelihood of cataracts developing. It's worth investing in good quality sunglasses with a high UV protection. Adding a wide-brimmed hat is another good way to reduce the impact on your eyes.

Maintain a healthy diet

There are lots of nutrients found in a healthy diet that can have a positive impact on your eyes as well as your body. These include fruit and vegetables, especially green leafy veg like spinach and leeks, and fatty fish such as salmon, trout and tuna.

And a healthy lifestyle

Your lifestyle plays an important role in your eye health. Make sure you get enough sleep so your eyes can rest and recharge. Regular exercise can also help reduce the risk of high blood pressure, diabetes and narrowing or hardening of the arteries, which can be associated with sight-loss-related eye conditions. Also, you're at greater risk of developing eye disease if you smoke, or if you drink more than the Government's recommended units of alcohol.

Give your eyes a break

Eye strain usually occurs after periods of intense use of the eyes, such as computer work or reading. Give your eyes a break every 20 minutes, either by doing something else or by glancing away for 20-30 seconds.

Keep it clean

Good hand hygiene is always recommended, but it's especially important when touching your eyes or around them. If you wear make-up, remember to change it as advised and wash your brushes/sponges regularly.

Avoid dry air

During winter months, it's likely that central heating is on regularly throughout the day and night. This can result in dry and scratchy eyes. Using a humidifier, particularly in rooms you spend a lot of time in, is a good way to reduce this problem, as is going outside for some fresh air.