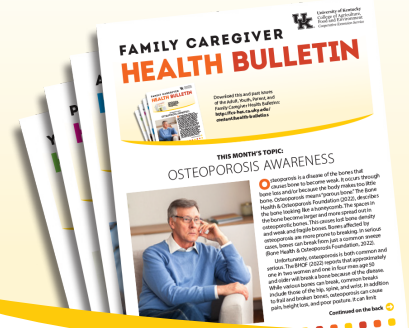


FAMILY CAREGIVER

HEALTH BULLETIN



JULY 2024

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC

KEEP AN EYE ON VISION AND EYE HEALTH



Eye health is important to think about at every stage of the lifespan. As we age, it is common to assume changes in vision are a normal part of getting older. And while vision does naturally change and even start to decline over time, some conditions need medical attention. For example, blurry vision may be a sign of a more serious condition like macular degeneration. Dry eyes could indicate rheumatoid arthritis. Pay attention to symptoms and remember prevention and early treatment are essential to eye health and aging. According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, paying attention to eye health is not only saving vision, but it is helping boost overall health.

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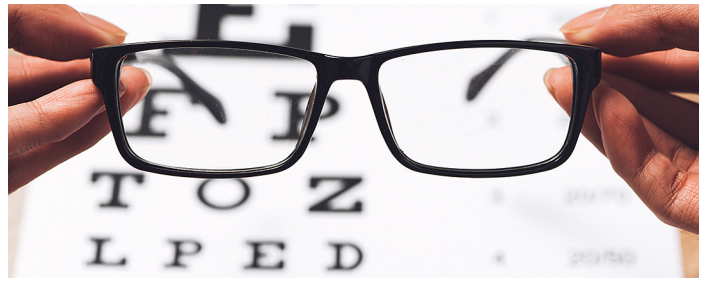
 Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

Schedule yearly eye checkups for total eye care, vision correction, and disease prevention.

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Do's

- **Schedule yearly eye checkups for total eye care, vision correction, and disease prevention.** Schedule an exam if you experience changes in your vision, infections, or symptoms of eye diseases. Let your ophthalmologist know if you have a family history of eye conditions. The American Academy of Ophthalmology recommends a baseline eye exam by age 40 for most people and exams every year for people at age 60 or older. Regular eye exams can detect a surprising number of non-eye diseases such as arthritis, diabetes, and even Alzheimer's disease. Medical advances in eye care are helping ophthalmologists save vision and boost overall health.
- **Maintain a diet rich in plant-based foods and low in saturated fats,** like a Mediterranean diet. Think green leafy vegetables, colorful fruits and vegetables, and nuts. These foods are full of antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals important for eye health.
- **Use supplements.** We try but cannot always get everything from our diets. Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids are ideal for eye health on both the inside and outside parts of the eye.
- **Exercise for your eyes.** Pick something you enjoy so you stick with it. Choose an activity that gets your heart rate up.
- **Wear oversized sunglasses and a hat.** Sunglasses must have a label acknowledging protection against UVA and UVB rays. Also, wear a hat because the sun can affect both inside the eye and the skin around the eye. It is important to protect all of that and provide better coverage.
- **Wear proper prescription lenses** to reduce eye strain and discomfort and increase safety.
- **Wear protective eyewear** during sporting activities, hazardous work, and cooking and cleaning. For example, certain methods of cooking might spatter oil. Some cleaning products include hazardous chemicals and often have information about eye safety. Never



mix chemicals. Even activities like gardening may cause a poke in an unprotected eye.

- **Be mindful of makeup and other cosmetics.** For example, sharing makeup or using eye makeup older than three months can spread bacteria. Thoroughly remove makeup before going to bed. Consider avoiding makeup that is hard to remove. Waterproof mascara can cause issues with the surface of eye, inflammation of eye lids, and problems with your cornea.
- **Be careful around kids.** Kids playing with things like balls and bats or sticks, or Nerf, water, paint, or dart guns might accidentally hit or shoot an eye — their own or someone else's.
- **Avoid smoking and vaping.** Smoking and vaping can lead to diseases that cause problems with eye health.
- **Monitor screen time to reset and relax your eyes.** Practice the 20-20-20 rule. This means that for every 20 minutes you stare at a screen, look away at something that is 20 feet away for a total of 20 seconds.

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