

## How Is Your Eye Health? Observing National Eye Exam Month

August is the hottest month – we're drenched in sweat, getting the most exposure to sunlight and consequently, UV ray exposure. In the medical field we tend to emphasize the negative effects of UV rays on the skin, however, August is devoted to making sure we do not forget about eye care! Nearly 13 million Americans are in need of vision correction – and almost half of children under the age of 12 have never been to an optometrist!

Eye health and eye safety are huge factors in our quality of life, no matter the age. Most ophthalmologists and optometrists would agree that no symptoms of vision problems does not mean there are no problems! Practicing good eye care means regular eye checks – if you are between 40 and 65, that's every 2-4 years. If you're 65+, every 1-2 years is a must.

The risks of UV ray exposure to the eye can include cataracts, growths, and cancer. However, do not let that make you fear the sun! Our eyes need exposure to natural light every day to maintain our sleep cycles. It's all about moderation and proper protection – sunglasses with UV-blockers and hats can be the best protection against the sun.

### **For younger individuals and children, symptoms of vision problems include:**

Chronic headaches – are you having inexplicable headaches? Visit your optometrist. An eyecare professional may be able to discover what is causing them.

Poor grades – 25% of children have vision problems. Poor vision may be the cause of poor grades and school performance. Take your child to the optometrist to avoid the pitfalls of learning problems and reading difficulties.

### **What causes most eye problems in aging individuals?**

Overall, weakness of the eye muscle leads to vision issues. Most symptoms of these issues include:

- Light sensitivity
- Blurred vision when wearing glasses
- Red eyes
- Burning sensations in the eyes
- Consistent eye pain
- Watering
- Black spots in your vision

Good habits make for better eye health. Always stay UV protected – with good sunglasses and eyeglasses. Getting a lot of sleep, keeping good lighting and resting the eyes will help as well.

As a medical professional in the eye care field, it's important to stay safe as well!

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