10 tips for healthy eyes

Take care of your eyes and reduce the risk of injury or eye conditions that are common in older age. **Here are 10 tips for healthy eyes:**

1 Get regular eye checks

Regular eye checks can help detect eye problems early and prevent vision loss. Your eyes can also reveal a lot about your general health. Optometrists are trained health professionals who assess the health of your eyes and prescribe corrective lenses if needed.

Medicare subsidises the cost of an eye check done by an optometrist of your choice:
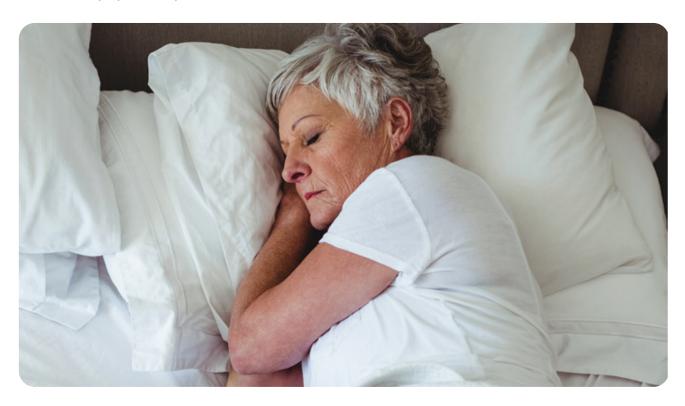
- Once every 3 years for people under 65
- Once every year for people 65+

2 Maintain a healthy lifestyle

A healthy lifestyle can help you look after your eyes. This includes:

- A balanced diet

- Regular physical activity

- Not smoking

The diet that's good for your heart and the rest of your body will also help your eyes.

3 Get quality sleep

- Sleep supports the healing and recovery of your eyes. It is crucial after minor injuries or irritation.

- Sleep is important for eye-muscle relaxation after periods of eye strain.

- Sleep repairs the tear-film coating on your eyes. Your tear film has oily, watery, and mucus layers. These three layers work together to keep your eyes comfortably moist. Dry eye disease can occur if there's a problem with any of these layers.

4 Wash your hands before touching your eyes

Your hands touch a variety of surfaces and objects throughout the day. Some of these may harbor harmful bacteria, viruses, and other pathogens. If you touch your eyes with unwashed hands, you can transfer these germs to the sensitive mucous membranes of your eyes, increasing the risk of infection.

If you use contact lenses, this is even more important. Even if the germs on your hands don't start an infection, they can still cause irritation. This can lead to discomfort, redness, and other eye-related problems.

5 Protect your eyes from sunlight

Wear sunglasses that block ultraviolet radiation and a hat with a wide brim when you are outside.

The sun's rays can damage your eyes. Wear sunglasses that block 99% or 100% of both UVA and UVB radiation from the sun.

Never look directly at the sun.

6 Wear your glasses

There are some common eye conditions that affect most people over the age of 65. For example, presbyopia is a normal change in the eye that makes it harder to focus on close objects, read a book, or use a smartphone. It can be corrected with reading glasses, bifocals, multifocals, or contact lenses.

Glasses can also help you see better when they're clean and free of smudges.

7 Use the right lighting

Your eyes need the right amount of light for activities like reading and hobbies. Good lighting helps prevent eye strain and fatigue. Too much light can be a problem because it creates glare and discomfort.

Some eye conditions can be more sensitive to levels of light. For example: macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, and retinitis pigmentosa. A low-vision optometrist or ophthalmologist can advise on the best colour temperature of light, brightness of light, and type of light bulb to maximize vision.

8 Give your eyes a break

Staring at any one thing for too long can tire your eyes. You may also forget to blink, resulting in dry eyes and fatigue.

Limit the amount of time you spend looking at screens and take regular breaks when working on a computer or watching TV. This helps relax your eye muscles. It can reduce the symptoms of computer-vision syndrome, such as dry eyes, blurred vision, headaches, and eye fatigue.

9 Protect your eyes in risky situations

Many eye injuries can occur in and around your home, or from other activities like sports and hobbies. Choose protective eyewear that matches the risks you might face. Make sure it meets safety standards and feels comfortable. For example:

- **Safety glasses** provide protection from flying debris, particles, and moderate impact.
- **Safety goggles** seal around the eyes. This protects eyes from impact, chemical splashes, dust, and vapours.

10 Check your family history

Some eye problems run in families. You may have a higher chance of getting glaucoma, macular degeneration, or cataracts if your relatives have them. Knowing more about family eye health can help you take steps to reduce your risk.

Talking about eye health and family-health history can also promote awareness and support within your family.

More helpful information

Everyone is different so some of these tips may work better for you than others.

If you need more information, get in touch with one of our helpful team on 1**800 951 971**.

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