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Nearly 80% of what we perceive through our senses comes from our sight, so protecting our eyesight should be a priority. Most eye diseases are preventable. In addition to regular checkups, take these simple steps to protect your vision:

Take a multivitamin: Vitamins B6, B12, C, and E; beta-carotene; folic acid; and copper and zinc may slow the progression of eye degeneration and can delay the onset of cataracts.

Get your omega-3s: Omega-3 fatty acids, found in fish like salmon, tuna, and halibut, can minimize dry eyes and protect the tear film, and even prevent cataracts. Eat two to three servings a week or take a daily fish-oil supplement.

Enlist antioxidants: Antioxidants minimize free-radical damage, which is caused by environmental factors like sunlight and pollution. Try to have at least two servings a day of foods like berries, oranges, plums, and cherries.

Eat well: Eating dark, leafy greens like spinach, kale, and collard greens contain lutein and zeaxanthin, which can reduce the risk of cataracts and macular degeneration. Try for two servings a day. Orange vegetables, like carrots, pumpkin, and butternut squash contain beta-carotene, which keeps your eyes healthy.

Quit smoking: It's another reason to quit smoking—smoking increases the risk of cataracts, macular degeneration, and optic nerve damage.

Wear sunglasses: Ultraviolet light is a major factor in hardening of the lenses and in the development of cataracts and macular degeneration. When you're outside, wear sunglasses with dark lenses that filter out 100% of UV rays (check the label). A hat with a brim of at least four inches can add extra protection.

Get regular exercise: Aerobic exercise can decrease the pressure inside the eyes, which can reduce the risk for glaucoma. Aim for three 30-minute workouts a week.

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Have Questions?
We Have Answers!



Wear eye protection: Obviously, if you work in construction, manufacturing, or other jobs with the potential for flying particles—wear eye protection. But even when you're doing odd jobs around the house, protect your eyes with a pair of inexpensive plastic eye goggles.

Take care of your contacts: Contacts come with responsibility. Make sure solutions aren't expired, keep your contacts clean, and take your contacts out when your eyes are irritated to prevent corneal ulcers.

Beware of eye strain: Computer work and Internet surfing can take a toll—focused work keeps you from blinking as frequently. Take frequent breaks from these activities.

The American Academy of Ophthalmology recommends a first eye exam around age 5. Follow up with your eye doctor regularly since vision normally changes with age. Serious eye problems, like glaucoma and some eye degeneration, are treatable if detected early.

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