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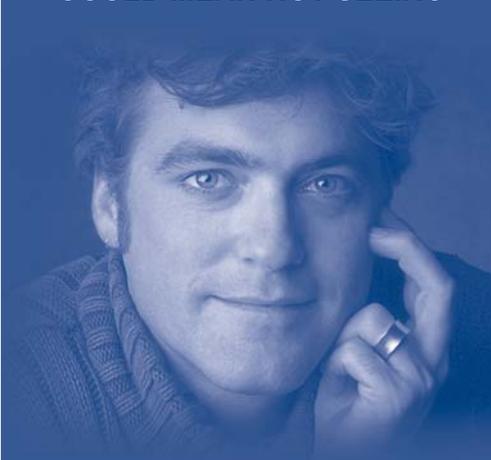
eye care update NOVEMBER 2006-2007 EDITION

Blinded by our Ignorance

A recent Ipsos-Reid survey, on behalf of the Canadian Association of Optometrists, revealed 76 per cent of Canadians rated their ability to see as more important than their ability to walk (14%), talk (6%), or hear (3%). Yet only 35 per cent say they have their eyes checked at least once a year. Sadly, more of us have our vehicles and furnaces serviced annually than have a yearly check-up on our eyes. When considering from a long list of possible expenditures that on line Canadians would be willing to pay around \$100 for, if they had to pay for it themselves, many choose "dinner for two at a nice restaurant" (58%) or "tickets for a concert" (45%) than "a general eye-health examination from an optometrist"(30%). So why are we

apathetic when it comes to our eyes? People don't do anything unless there is a problem. However, there can be a problem without a person realizing it. One in nine of us will develop irreversible vision loss by the time we hit age 65. At age 75, the proportion jumps to one out of four! Eye care professionals want to get the message out that as much as 80 per cent of that damage could be prevented. Serious eye disease is common, often offers no symptoms or warnings and can lead to vision loss. Serious eye disease can just come and change your life. You can do something about it. Vision loss is often preventable if it is caught early. See your optometrist regularly for a thorough eye health check-up.

**NOT SEEING AN OPTOMETRIST
 COULD MEAN NOT SEEING**



**YOUR EYES DESERVE
 AN OPTOMETRIST**

How often should you visit your Optometrist?

Preschool (birth to 5 years):

immediately, if parents sense a problem. Otherwise, by age 3 and again prior to entering school.

School age (6 to 19 years):

Annually

Adult (20 to 64 years): Every one to two years depending on your health and your optometrist's recommendations

Older Adult (65+) Annually

Age-Related Macular Degeneration (ARMD) Statistics

- ARMD is the leading cause of blindness in Canada and it is four times more prevalent than Alzheimer's and Parkinson's combined
- The disorder is the leading cause of severe vision loss and blindness in people over the age of 50
- More than 2.1 million Canadians are currently affected by ARMD
- One in five Canadians between the ages of 50 and 64 is at risk of developing ARMD

ARMD is an eye disease that causes deterioration of the macula. The macula is the central part of the retina at the back of the eye and is responsible for the clear, central vision needed for daily activities like reading or driving. ARMD causes the progressive loss of central vision, eventually leaving only peripheral vision intact.

Did You Know

- Studies have shown that individuals whose first degree relatives had glaucoma were about nine times more likely to develop the disease.
- **On average we blink 12 times per minute. But wait, did you know that when we're on the computer**

we only blink 5 times per minute? That can add up to dry eyes.

- Ever wonder why your pet's eyes glow in the dark? Most animal's eyes contain something human eyes don't have; it's called a tapetum. This is an extra layer

next to the retina that intensifies and reflects light, giving your pet a greater ability to see at night.

- **It is estimated that 60 per cent of children identified as having learning difficulties have undetected vision problems.**

Your Vision and Computers

Computers have made our lives easier, more efficient and more fun. Whether you use your computer for leisure, business or something in between you should know that computers and video display terminal (VDTs) can create challenges and problems for your eyes and vision. Many patients complain of eye strain, tired and burning eyes, dry, itchy or filmy eyes as well as blurred vision, neck aches and headaches.

Helpful tips to take the sting out of computer use

Correct positioning of your computer, keyboard any typing copy is essential. Your screen should be positioned about an arm's length from your eyes and 20 degrees below eye level. Consider foot and wrist rests for added comfort. Room lighting should be diffuse, not direct, to reduce glare and reflections from your screen. Anti-reflective coating on the lenses of your glasses can be applied by your optometrist to reduce discomfort and to ease reduced vision from bright and/or flickering light sources such as VDTs and fluorescent lights. We can also design an eyeglass prescription for your workstation.

Take time out, our 20-20-20 rule

Taking a break from your work is essential to the health and comfort of your eyes. Every 20 minutes take a 20 second break and focus your eyes on something at least 20 feet away. This will give your eyes a much needed break and reduce some of the symptoms mentioned earlier.

What's New in Contact Lenses

The Nike Maxsight sport-tinted contact lens will provide patients with the edge they have been looking for while allowing them to see sport better. It is the result of 7 years of research from concept to realization. It comes in 2 different tints, Amber and Grey-Green.

Amber tinted lenses are designed for use in sports where tracking a fast moving ball is critical such as in football, tennis, lacrosse, baseball, soccer, and rugby. Amber selectively filters specific wavelengths in the blue green portion

of the visible spectrum, making the ball POP off the background. Grey-green tinted lenses are designed for use in sports played in bright sunlight where visual comfort and glare are concerns (such as golf, running, hiking and training). Grey-Green enhances the green and red portions of the visual spectrum to improve detail and contour recognition. If you are interested in this lens technology and wish to know if you are a candidate for one of these lenses, please call the office to book a contact lens consultation.

What's new in low vision aids

The simple act of watching TV can be a challenge to low vision seniors. MAX TV are hands-free, head mounted telescopic glasses that bring the screen 2.1 times closer. This allows users to sit back and enjoy their favorite shows, sporting events, movies, theatre, bird watching or any other distance viewing activities in which a magnified image would be helpful. MAX detail are hands-free, head mounted glasses that provide 2 times magnification for focusing on near objects at about 16 inches or 40 cm. They are perfect for any near viewing situation activity where a magnified image is helpful.



Eye and Vision Myths

"I need bifocals! I did too much reading and close work over the years."

You cannot wear your eyes out by using them, and you certainly cannot preserve your vision by limiting your reading or close work. The need for bifocals is a natural part of the aging process.