

# Strive

FOR BETTER HEALTH



## Eyes, the window to your...health?

Your eyes are important to you for many reasons, but do you know they can often reveal problems going on throughout the body? Getting your eyes examined every one to two years is important. Here are just a few things your eyes can reveal:

- **Diabetes.** Diabetes causes damage to the blood vessels in the back of the eye and can lead to blindness. It also puts you at higher risk for other eye diseases such as glaucoma and cataracts.
- **High Blood Pressure.** Hypertension has little to no visual symptoms, except in the eyes. High blood pressure causes narrowing or ballooning of the retina's blood vessels that signal problems with bigger vessels which supply the heart and brain.
- **Inflammation.** Waking up with achy or bloodshot eyes not caused by lack of sleep or alcohol? Pain and redness may be a sign of many ailments from Crohn's to arthritis.
- **Stress.** Blurry or hazy vision may not be due to computer usage – these symptoms may be due to stress.

## Support Your Vision

Scheduling your eye exam isn't the only thing you can do for your eyes. Follow these tips to support your vision:

- **Eat more carotenoids.** These are nutrients found in certain plant foods like carrots, sweet potatoes, tomatoes and squash. Brightly colored fruits and vegetables contain the most carotenoids and offer eye-disease prevention.
- **Eat them with fat.** Carotenoids are fat-soluble nutrients, which means our digestive system absorbs them best if eaten with a source of healthy fat, such as olive oil, nuts, seeds, coconut or avocado.
- **Watch your weight.** Your risk of developing diabetes or other conditions that can lead to vision loss, such as glaucoma, goes up if you are overweight.
- **Wear sunglasses.** Your eyes need protection from ultra-violet rays. Next time you pick up a pair of sunglasses, choose ones that block out 99 to 100 percent of both UV-A and UV-B radiation.

Due to the nation's aging population, the number of blind and visually impaired people in the United States is estimated to double by 2030. So, if you haven't had an optometrist check your eyes recently, schedule an exam today!

## Helpful Resources

- [Eye Safety](#): Taking care of your vision.
- [Top Health Newsletter \(English\)](#): The monthly health promotion and wellness newsletter.
- [Top Health Newsletter \(Spanish\)](#): The monthly health promotion and wellness newsletter.