

Eye Examinations Can Save Your Vision

What do you know about eye health?



Did you know that eye diseases can cause you to lose your sight before you notice symptoms? This happens because your brain adapts to vision loss making it difficult to notice a slow continuing loss of your sight. About a third of all people develop some type of vision reducing eye disease by age 65.

What are common eye diseases?



Common eye diseases include Glaucoma, Diabetic Retinopathy, Age-Related Macular Degeneration (ARMD) and Cataracts. Early treatment of these diseases is critically important to prevent permanent vision loss or blindness.

Who is at risk?



African Americans are 6-8 more times likely to get Glaucoma and go blind from it than white Americans; and Asians are more likely to get less common types of Glaucoma. African Americans, Hispanics, American Indians and Asian-Americans have a higher risk of Diabetes than White Americans; and 45% of people with Diabetes have some type of Diabetic eye disease. 90% of Age-Related Macular Degeneration occurs in White Americans.

Can you protect your vision as you age?



As you age, if you wear glasses you may need periodic changes to your lens prescription and or get reading glasses. **But there are some ways to protect your eyes against sight-threatening eye disease:**

1 Know your family history, eye diseases such as ARMD can be passed on from your family.

2 Eat a healthy diet including fruits and green leafy vegetables such as spinach or kale.

3 Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes from the UV rays of the sun.

4 Most of all, get periodic eye exams especially if you are at high risk for one of the common eye disease.

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How often should I get my eyes tested?



There is no one size fits all, it depends on your age, health history and risk factors. **You should see your Doctor for an Eye exam and decide with them how often is best for you.** If you are unsure when you last had an Eye exam or it has been more than 1 year, call your Ophthalmologist (eye doctor) for a follow up. If you need help you can always ask your Care Team to help you.

How can I get ready for an eye exam?

- ✓ Before going to your eye exam **write down any questions about your vision.**
- ✓ **Tell your doctor if there is anyone in your family with a history of eye diseases** or if you take any medication (bring a list to help you remember).
- ✓ **Ask someone come with you for support,** this can be important for certain types of tests where you may have blurry vision for a short time after the test.

What are some additional eye care tips?

- ✓ **Think about eye safety,** at work or during recreational activities.
- ✓ **Wear eye protection** anytime there might be a risk of being hurt or hit in the eye.
- ✓ **Reduce your screen time if you spend a lot of time at the computer.** Try the 20-20-20 rule: Every 20 minutes, look away about 20 feet in front of you for 20 seconds to reduce eye stress.

Where can I get more information?

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention:

www.cdc.gov/visionhealth/resources/features/keep-eye-on-vision-health.html

The American Academy of Ophthalmology:

www.aao.org/2020-year-of-the-eye

PHP Care Complete FIDA-IDD (Medicare - Medicaid Plan)

The State of New York has created a Participant Ombudsman Program called the Independent Consumer Advocacy Network (ICAN) to provide participants free, confidential assistance on any services offered by Partners Health Plan. ICAN may be reached toll-free at 1-844-614-8800 (TTY users call 711, then follow the prompts to dial 844-614-8800) or online at icannys.org.

Partners Health Plan is a managed care plan that contracts with Medicare and the New York State Department of Health (Medicaid) to provide benefits to Participants through the Fully Integrated Duals Advantage for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (FIDA-IDD) Demonstration.