



6 Easy Ways to Keep Your Eyes Healthy

Simple tips for keeping your eyes healthy at every age.

It's easy to take your eyes—and vision—for granted. Especially if you feel you see well and have no irritations. But to keep your eyes healthy and to help prevent the onset of eye diseases, it's important to be proactive with your health.

Your overall health can impact your eyes and, in turn, your vision. Thankfully, there are some easy things you can do now to help **keep your eyes healthy at every age**.

1. Get Annual Eye Exams

An annual visit to your **VSP® network eye doctor** is an essential part of maintaining the health of your eyes. **At your eye exam**, your eye doctor will check for any vision correction needs due to refractive errors like astigmatism, nearsightedness, and farsightedness.

But that's not all they'll look at. Your eye doctor **will keep an eye out** for signs of conditions like glaucoma, cataracts, and macular degeneration and watch for signs of health conditions like diabetes, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure, all of which have signs that can be **detected through an eye exam**.

2. Wear Sunglasses

Did you know that too much exposure to UV rays (like those put off from the sun) can **increase your risk** of developing eye diseases and even lead to photokeratitis, or sunburn of the eye? Protecting your eyes from harmful sunlight is an easy way to keep your eyes healthy. Like your skin, your eyes need protection from harmful UV rays year-round, not just in the summer.

Sunglasses are a simple way to get the defense your eyes need—just be sure always to wear sunglasses with 100% UVA and UVB protection. It's important to defend your eyes like your skin, so whenever you lather on sunscreen, think about **shielding your eyes from the sun**, too.

3. Stay Hydrated

It's important to stay hydrated for overall good health as it **plays a key role** in keeping all your body's systems working well—including your eyes. Dehydration, which occurs when you don't have enough fluid in your body, can impact everything from your mood to your memory and cognitive processing abilities.

The amount of water you need to stay hydrated varies based on many factors, such as your age, activity level, gender, and overall health.

4. Get Enough Sleep

The importance of sleep goes way beyond just boosting our mood. Getting the recommended amount of sleep each night is needed to **ensure proper cognitive and behavioral functions** in our bodies. Not getting enough sleep can lead to delayed reactions and mood shifts, and **put you at increased risk** of developing diabetes and high blood pressure—all of which can also impact your eyes.

Have you ever experienced a twitching eyelid? This can also **occur when you are overly tired**. So, if you've been skimping on your rest time, prioritize getting enough sleep each night so your body can recharge and function well.

5. Eat a Well-Balanced Diet

Much like drinking water and getting sleep, eating a healthy diet does more for your vision than you may realize. Eating a well-balanced diet of fruits, vegetables, proteins, and dairy, ensures your body has the nutrients it needs to run well. Eating well can also help you **maintain a healthy weight**.

These days it's relatively easy to obtain the nutrients your eyes need through a healthy diet. For example, dark leafy greens, avocados, carrots, and fish, **are all eye-friendly foods**. Nutrients like lutein, zeaxanthin, vitamins C and E, and zinc, have all also been shown to **reduce the risk** of some eye diseases like cataracts and age-related macular degeneration.

6. Be Active

Did you know exercise is also a factor in maintaining healthy vision? Just 30 minutes of physical exercise each day can **positively impact** your heart health, energy levels, and more.

Sticking to a regular fitness schedule can also help prevent high blood pressure, diabetes, and many other conditions that can affect your eyes. Or, if you already have these diseases, exercise can help you manage them better. Plus, exercising can help lower your IOP (intraocular pressure), which **improves blood flow** to the retina and optic nerve.

Make Caring for Your Eyes a Priority

Your overall health and wellness play a key role in keeping your eyes healthy too. If it's been a while since you've had your eyes checked, schedule an appointment with a **VSP network provider near you**.

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