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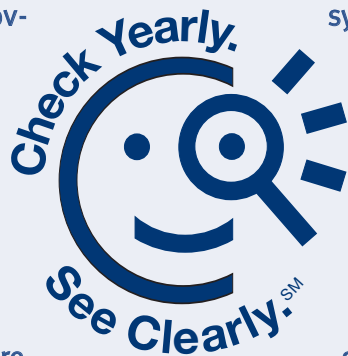
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eye care update

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Don't be shortsighted about your eye care

November 1st 2004 brought a change in the way eye care in Ontario was covered. Eye care coverage for children 19 and under and seniors 65 years and older remains unchanged and is covered annually. Coverage for adults between the ages of 20-64 is no longer covered under OHIP for regular eye examinations. This change in coverage is the result of a chronic lack of provincial funding for optometric eye care for the past 16 years. The provincial government decided not to fund primary eye care for adults any longer, which would bring them in line with other provincial governments. Don't be



shortsighted about your eye health. You may be tempted to skip or miss a few eye examinations now that you have to pay for them. Take a moment to think about the potential consequences. Eye diseases can develop without pain or noticeable symptoms. Don't wait until you have pain or blurred vision to seek treatment because often the damage is done and your vision may be permanently gone. Some adults will still have coverage. Adults with certain medical conditions (diabetes for example) will continue to have their eye examinations paid for by OHIP. Please check with us if you require clarification.

Ask the Eye Doctor Intralase

LASIK has proven to be a very successful procedure for correcting vision disorders, especially nearsightedness or myopia. While complications are rare, all surgery carries some degree of risk. A new procedure called Intralase, makes it possible to significantly reduce the majority of LASIK complications. Intralase is the first blade free laser technology for performing the critical first step in the LASIK procedure: creating the corneal flap. Prior to Intralase, this step was done manually using a handheld device called a microkeratome blade. While this method has worked well over the years and is still commonly used, the performance of these devices can be unpredictable and is the source of the majority of LASIK complications. With Intralase, the surgeon uses a computer-guided laser to create the corneal flap. This provides the surgeon with more control, enabling him or her to accurately establish precise dimensions and thickness during the first step in creating the corneal flap. Intralase is the newest technology available for corneal flap creation and will provide many patients greater confidence in choosing laser vision correction in the future.

By the year 2020, the World Health Organization projects the number of myopic (nearsighted) individuals worldwide will rise to 5.3 billion, accounting for 60% of the world's population.

did you know

If you have diabetes, there's about a 50/50 chance you also have dry eye – the result of decreased corneal sensation that is often associated with diabetic retinopathy. Studies have shown consumption of Omega – 3 fatty acids can provide dry eye relief.

did you know

Smoking can lead to blindness. The risk of Macular Degeneration in smokers is more than double that of non-smokers and this risk level only starts to decrease after 10 years of not smoking.

IN THE NEWS Study Links Heavy Computer Use to Glaucoma

A study conducted at the Toho University School of Medicine in Japan has found that people who are considered to be heavy computer users are far more likely to develop glaucoma. Researchers studied over 10,000 workers with an average age of 43. Those who were considered to be heavy computer users (over 8 hours per day on the computer) were found to be twice as likely to have glaucoma as medium to light computer users. It was also found that people who are myopic, or nearsighted, are at an even higher risk of developing the disease.

Here are some tips to help and alleviate the stress heavy computer use can have on the eye:

- Take frequent 'eye' breaks- avoid staring at your computer screen for prolonged periods
- Remember to blink.
- Make sure your work space is adequately lit.
- Avoid sources of glare on the screen.
- Work at the proper distance – avoid sitting too closely to the screen.
- If you wear glasses, make sure that you are wearing the proper prescription for computer work.
- Make sure the brightness and contrast of your screen are set to the proper levels.



New Hope for patients with Dry Macular Degeneration

Age-Related Macular Degeneration (ARMD) currently affects 2 million Canadians and it is expected that that number will triple in the next 20 years. In North America, a case of ARMD is diagnosed every three minutes. ARMD is a degenerative eye disease affecting the central retina or macula and is the leading cause of permanent central vision loss in people over the age of 50. There are two types of ARMD:

Dry ARMD – 90% of all cases

Wet ARMD – 10% of all cases

Previously, the only treatment for the most common (dry) form has been limited to vitamin therapy, but now there is RHEO.

Rheopheresis blood filtration (RHEO) technology has been developed through clinical research during the past 10 years to treat the dry form of ARMD. In ARMD, poor blood flow to the back of the eye results in a build up of fatty waste deposits

called drusen. As the disease progresses, the drusen increase in number resulting in an increased risk of progressive vision loss. RHEO is a form of blood filtration that removes large proteins and fats from the blood to increase blood flow to the eye. Researchers believe that the improved microcirculation more effectively supplies the macular cells with oxygen and nutrients. Results from recent international clinical trials demonstrate that RHEO is a safe and effective treatment for dry ARMD patients, stabilizing vision loss and in more than half of treated cases, actually improving visual function. Rheopheresis is commercially available in Europe and Canada. It is currently being evaluated in Phase III FDA trials within the United States. Please speak with one of our doctors if you would like more information about RHEO, vitamin therapy or available treatments for wet ARMD.

ATTENTION CONTACT LENS WEARERS Do you experience any of these symptoms when wearing contacts?

- End of day lens discomfort
- Sore, irritated eyes
- Eyes feel dry
- Red eyes
- Not being able to wear your lenses for a full day
- Blurred or fluctuating vision

It may be that your eyes are suffering from a lack of oxygen. Your eyes need oxygen to stay healthy and comfortable. New advancements in contact lens materials allow 5-6 times more oxygen to reach your eyes resulting in whiter, brighter healthy-looking eyes. Please ask us if you are a candidate for one of these newer lenses.

NEW ONE Day Colour Contact Lenses are here!

Many patients have asked for coloured contacts for special occasions. Now you can make an impression, not a commitment. Single-use colours are now available in packages of 10 lenses for only \$25! Colours available at this time are blue, green and pure hazel.