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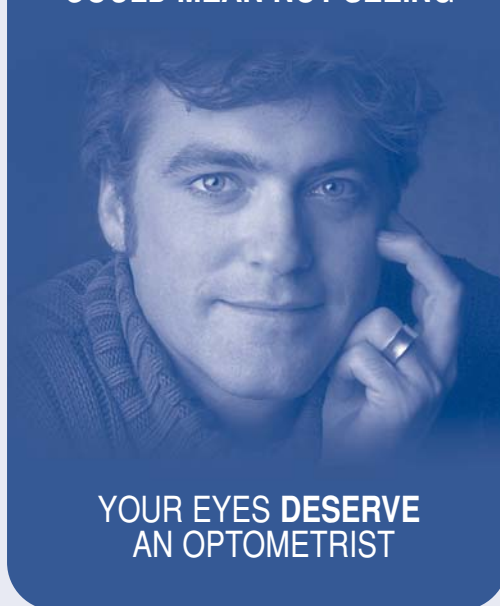
eye care update NOVEMBER 2006-2007 EDITION

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.**

