

Information From Your Eye M.D.

WHEN SHOULD YOU SEE AN EYE M.D.

An Eye M.D. is an ophthalmologist – a medical doctor or doctor of osteopathy (DO) who specializes in eye and vision care. Eye M.D.s are specially trained to provide the full spectrum of eye care, from prescribing glasses and contact lenses to complex and delicate eye surgery.

Read below to see when you and your family should visit your Eye M.D. for a comprehensive eye evaluation. Protecting your eyes, and early detection and treatment of eye problems, are the best ways to take care of your vision throughout life.

Certain individuals may be at greater risk for eye problems and may need to see an Eye M.D. more often than recommended. If you have the following risk factors:

- A family history of eye problems
- Are an African American over age 40
- Diabetes
- A personal history of eye injury that required medical or surgical care

Infants

A pediatrician, family physician, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant should screen a newborn's eyes for general health in the nursery.

By six months of age, all infants' eyes should be screened by a health care professional (Eye M.D., primary care provider, family physician, pediatrician or other health care professional) or a trained screener.

An infant should receive a comprehensive eye examination whenever there are questions about his or her eye health. No infant is too young for an eye examination.

Before Age 5

Since it is possible for your child to have a serious vision problem without being aware of it, your child should have his or her eyes screened at ages three and five by an eye care professional, physician or trained screened for eye conditions such as:

- Strabismus (crossed eyes)
- Amblyopia (lazy eye)
- Ptosis (drooping of the upper eyelid)
- Refractive errors (nearsightedness, farsightedness and astigmatism)

If there is a family history of vision problems or if your child appears to have any of the above conditions speak to your Eye M.D. right away about when and how often your child's eyes should be screened.

Age 3 to 19

To ensure your child's or teenager's eyes remain healthy, he or she should have his or her eyes screened every one to two years during regular check-up appointments.

Age 20 to Age 39

Most young people have healthy eyes, but still need to take care of their vision by wearing protective eyewear when working in dangerous areas, playing sports, doing woodwork or yard work, working with chemicals or taking part in other activities that could result in an eye injury.

Have a complete eye exam by an Eye M.D. at least once between the ages of 20 and 29 and at least twice between the ages of 30 and 39.

You should also be aware of symptoms that could point to a problem. See an Eye M.D. right away if you experience any eye problems such as:

- Visual changes or pain
- Flashes of light

- Seeing spots or ghost like images
- Dark spot appears in vision
- Lines and edges appear distorted or wavy
- Dry eyes with itching and burning

Ages 40 to 64

Even the adult and middle age groups can be affected by eye problems. Preventive measures should be taken to protect eyes from injury and detect disease early.

Schedule a comprehensive eye evaluation with your Eye M.D. every two to four years.

65 and Older

Seniors 65 and older should have comprehensive eye evaluations by their Eye M.D. every one to two years to assess eye health and diagnose any eye conditions, such as cataracts, glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration.

Where Can I Get More Information?

Your Eye M.D. is the best source of information on scheduled eye examinations, as well as eye health and safety.

If you would like more information on scheduled eye examinations, please visit the American Academy of Ophthalmology's public information Web site at www.medem.com/eyemd.

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