

Q&A Q&A Q&A

Knowing When To Visit Your Eye Care Professional

by Rodney Tahran, O.D., F.A.A.O.
(NAPSA)—Regular eye exams



Dr. Tahran

are an important part of maintaining good vision, but how do you know when you should visit the eye doctor or how often to get your eyes checked?

It's always important to consult your eye care professional to make specific decisions about your vision needs, but there are some basic guidelines to follow:

When should I visit an eye doctor for an exam?

- If you notice a change in your vision, you should schedule an appointment with an eye care professional (ophthalmologist or optometrist) immediately.

- If you have a family history of certain eye conditions (e.g., glaucoma) or health conditions (e.g., diabetes), regular eye exams also are recommended.

- Regular eye exams make good sense for everyone as they can detect vision and other related problems early enough for effective treatment.

How often should I get an eye exam?

- Because vision is constantly changing as we age and mature, an annual eye examination is a good idea.

- For adults who are 40 or older, annual eye examinations not only ensure that any existing prescription is correct, but also help prevent, or identify early symptoms of, potentially serious conditions, such as cataracts, glaucoma or macular degeneration.

How do I choose a qualified eye care professional?

- Ask family or friends for suggestions.

- Locate one through the Web site www.vision1to1.com.

- Look for one on the provider list from your insurance company.

- Consider things that may be important to you, such as office hours and location.

What should I expect during an eye exam?

- *Patient history.* Tell your doctor about eye and health problems, allergies, vision symptoms, family history of eye conditions and your occupational (Do you work long hours on a computer? Do you read a lot?) and recreational (Do you spend time in the sun? Will you be going skiing?) vision needs.

- *Eye health tests.* Your doctor will test for glaucoma and look for symptoms of conditions such as cataracts or macular degeneration. He or she can also detect high blood pressure, diabetes and high cholesterol.

- *Vision testing.* These tests will analyze distance and near vision, among other things, and will determine the need for corrective lenses or if your current lenses need to be changed.

- *Treatment options.* Depending on the results of the tests, the doctor will recommend treatment options and/or provide you with a prescription for corrective lenses, if necessary.

What questions should I expect my doctor to answer?

What will you be doing during my eye exam? What tests will you do? What vision problem(s) do I have? What's the best way to correct them? What type of lenses do you recommend? When should I have my next exam?

What should you look for in new eyeglasses?

Whether you have your prescription filled by the eye doctor

or take it to an optician, you can also ask:

- What are the newest and best lens options for me?

- How can anti-reflective coatings, such as Crizal®, available on Varilux Comfort® progressive addition lenses, help?

- What are the benefits of the thin, lighter weight lenses?

- How should I care for my glasses or contacts?

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Dr. Rodney Tahran is vice president of professional relations and clinical affairs for Essilor of America, Inc., and serves as an adjunct professor at the Southern California College of Optometry. He has served on the board of Prevent Blindness Florida, and is a member of the American Optometric Association, The Institute for Contact Lens Research and the Association for Research in Vision Ophthalmology.