

Insight: Vision and Eye Health



Did you know? More than 80% of 3,500-plus U.S. adults age 18 and older surveyed in August 2019 said they were knowledgeable about eye and vision health.

Yet fewer than 20% correctly identified the three main causes of blindness in the U.S., which are glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration and diabetic eye disease, according to the American Academy of Ophthalmology. And only about a third knew we do not always experience symptoms before losing vision to eye diseases.

Take the following self-assessment to learn if you may be at risk for vision problems.

Have you ever had an eye injury or eye surgery? yes/no
Eye injuries and surgeries can increase your risk for eye disorders. See an eye care provider (ophthalmologist) regularly to check your vision.

Have you noticed a change in your vision during the past 12 months? yes/no
Any changes in vision, such as night blindness, blurred vision or sensitivity to light, should be reported to your eye care provider. Don't delay.

Do you have persistent pain or redness in or around your eye? yes/no
Ongoing pain not due to sinus problems, allergies, headache or eye strain can signal a serious eye problem. If your eye hurts continuously, get emergency care.

Do you have diabetes? yes/no
People with diabetes are at risk for diabetic retinopathy, an eye disease that harms blood vessels in the eye. If you have diabetes, eye experts say you need a dilated eye exam annually or as often as your provider advises.

Do your children get regular eye exams, too? yes/no
Kids are susceptible to nearsightedness, amblyopia (lazy eye) and eye infections. Left untreated, these problems can interfere with reading, focusing and learning.

Don't put off seeking eye care from an ophthalmologist trained to identify possible threats to your vision. Glasses, contact lenses, LASIK (laser eye surgery) and other procedures can be used to restore good vision. Learn more at aao.org/eye-health.

Prevent Colds 5 Ways

Every year, U.S. adults have an average of two or three colds and children have even more, the CDC says.

Use these five tips for preventing colds:

- 1. Wash your hands often with soap and water.** Cold-causing viruses are picked up on surfaces and stay on your skin for hours. So, wash your hands regularly, lathering well for at least 20 seconds. Wash your hands before and after putting on, touching and taking off a face covering.
- 2. Keep hand sanitizer nearby when soap and water aren't available.** Make sure to use a product that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- 3. Be aware of where you put your hands.** Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands. Even a few cold virus particles can infiltrate your body through your eyes, nose or mouth and make you sick.
- 4. Avoid people who are sick. Keep your distance from others with colds.** If a family member has a cold, increase handwashing and avoid close contact as much as possible.
- 5. Disinfect surfaces which are frequently touched.** Wash toys with non-toxic soap and warm water and use disinfectant wipes on doorknobs and counter tops.



Tame the Seasonal Craze

Holiday shopping, cooking, decorating and festivities are fun but can also cause stress.

Exhaustion, occasional family squabbles and feelings of sadness when things don't always go as planned can dampen holiday spirits.

But don't let the seasonal rush get you down. Use these practical tips to minimize stress so you can enjoy the holidays.

- **Plan ahead and stick to a budget.** Money doesn't buy happiness or necessarily the best gifts. Consider making gifts if you have time.
- **Take care of you.** Don't skimp on sleep. Try to fit in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise weekly, such as walks, yoga or gym workouts.
- **Set aside family differences.** Consciously decide to accept friends and relatives as they are. Leave political and other contentious subjects off the table.
- **Remember: It's OK to say "no."** You don't have to participate in every activity or cook an elaborate meal if you'd rather not. There's also nothing wrong with taking shortcuts, such as ordering pre-cooked holiday food.
- **Accept your feelings.** Life isn't always happy, even during the holidays. If you're sad or anxious, reach out to friends and family and seek counseling if needed.



Note: Due to production lead time, this issue may not reflect the current COVID-19 situation in some or all regions of the U.S. For the most up-to-date information visit coronavirus.gov.

The **Smart Moves Toolkit**, including this issue's printable download, **Say Goodbye to Food Cravings** is at personalbest.com/extras/20V12tools.



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