

Beacon Centre talk all things 'Eye Health' in our latest blog!

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We have teamed up with one of our latest Community Partners, Beacon Centre, to share with you some top tips around good eye health! Let's take a look...

Balanced Diet

Maintaining a well-balanced, healthy diet is key to keeping your eyes healthy, and may help reduce your risk for developing eye conditions. Serious eye conditions may be avoided if you include foods that contain a range of vitamins, nutrients, and minerals, known as antioxidants. A well-balanced diet also helps you stay at a healthy weight which lowers your odds of obesity and related diseases like type 2 diabetes, which is one of the leading causes of blindness in adults.



Exercise

It's no secret that exercising is the best way to get in shape and stay fit. It keeps you healthy and helps you avoid serious health conditions. But, did you know that exercising is also extremely beneficial for your eye health? This is because the act of exercising releases hormones and anti-oxidants that are known to combat the effects of cell damage in the body, which also includes your eyes. While vision related problems cannot be fixed completely, exercising helps enhance overall eye health while protecting it from free radical damage and reducing the long-term effects.

Sleep

Most people admit to getting less than six hours of sleep a night, and there are even some who say on a good night they might get four to five hours of sleep. I'm sure you know the amount of sleep you get every night has a huge impact on your body's health, but something you may not know is that your eye health is also greatly affected by the amount of sleep you get. Some people have difficulties falling asleep at night and other people are just so busy that getting to bed at a decent hour is a chore itself. In order to keep your eyes strong and healthy, it's imperative that you get plenty of rest.



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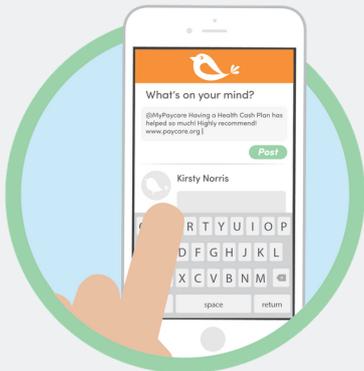
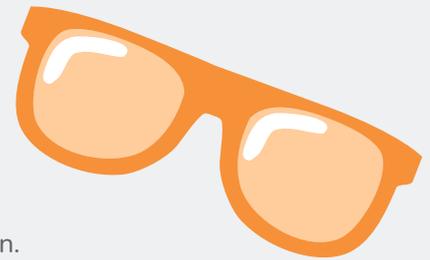
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Smoking

The effects of smoking on your eyes and vision may be significant. You know that smoking tobacco or being exposed to tobacco smoke can cause damage to your health, but it can also increase your risk of developing a number of eye disorders and diseases. If you smoke, stop. Quitting may lower your risk of long-term conditions.

Wear Sunglasses

Everyone knows sunglasses make it easier to see on a sunny day. However, wearing the right sunglasses is also a great defence against ultraviolet (UV) rays that can cause short and long-term eye damage. UV radiation from the sun can damage not only the skin of your eyelid but also the cornea, lens and other parts of the eye. UV exposure also contributes to the development of certain types of cataracts, growths on the eye and possibly macular degeneration.



Smart Phones

We're exposed to one screen more than any other – the glow of our smartphone. Research now suggests that for many people smartphone screen exposure is making our eyes worse. You're staring at a tiny screen for hours a day, trying to absorb as much content as you can while quickly scrolling through your favourite apps. Combined with most of us staring at a computer screen from 9am to 5pm – a recipe for more trips to the opticians! If you are using your phone constantly – especially if you use it primarily for texting, emailing and web browsing – a convenient way to reduce your blue light exposure is to use a blue light filter. We also advise five minutes away from the computer every hour.

Visit Your Opticians

The NHS recommends that you should get your eyes tested every two years (more often if advised by your ophthalmic practitioner or optometrist). It doesn't only assess your vision, it can also detect health problems such as diabetes and high blood pressure. Even if you do not wear glasses, it is important to take care of our eyes.

Wow – thanks guys! There are some really great tips there and it's clear to see why looking after and taking care of our eyes is so important! (See what we did there)

Don't forget, as a Paycare Policyholder, you can **claim back 100% of your optical costs each year** (up to an annual limit) and this includes a range of treatments and services from eye tests and laser eye surgery, to prescription safety glasses and contact lenses.



Thanks for sharing your insight Beacon!

Beacon is a well-established West Midlands charity which was founded in the Black Country and has since expanded.

The charity makes a visible difference to people living with sight loss and helps raise awareness of the importance of eye health. If you'd like to learn more about the charity, the services they provide and how you can help and support them, head to their fantastic website – www.beaconvision.org

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