

Insight

VISIQUE WINTER
NEWSLETTER 2022

5 winter eye care tips

1. Limit screen time.

It's common to see our amount of screen time increase during the winter months as we spend more time inside. Blue light from screens can lead to eye strain and fatigue. It can also disrupt the production of melatonin which can then affect your sleep. Follow the 20-20-20 rule: every 20 minutes look at something that is at least 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds.

2. Reduce exposure to glare – keep your sunnies on.

Harsh reflections can lead to driver fatigue and eye strain. Whether you're driving, at the snow, or on the water, you can still be exposed to a significant amount of glare in winter. Opt for polarised sunglasses and make sure you still wear your sunnies on an overcast day.

3. Prioritise rest and sleep.

Lack of sleep can be harmful to the health of your vision. When you sleep, your organs get to 'have a break' in order to be able to function to their full potential when you're awake. One key indicator that you're not getting enough sleep is eye spasms. A sufficient amount of sleep enables all of your eye muscles to rest and rejuvenate.

4. Stay hydrated – and hydrate the air inside too.

Dehydration can also cause your eyes to become dry. Without enough water your body will stop producing tears, which are essential to wash away debris, nourish the eye and help reduce the risk of eye infections. Heating can also contribute to dry skin and eyes. Having houseplants or a humidifier in your home can drastically improve dry indoor conditions.

5. Be aware of UV radiation reflected from the snow.

It's a well-known fact that increased amounts of UV exposure from direct sunlight puts us at a greater risk for skin cancer and can even lead to cataracts. However, UV radiation can also be reflected from the snow and while it may not always cause a sunburn, it poses just as great a threat to our vision health. So, make sure you take quality sunglasses with 100% UV protection on your next trip to the snow.

Sight Gags by Scott Lee, O.D.



*"That's it for our Friday meeting.
It's now 15 minutes until
your eye doctor's office closes.
Call them now and tell them
you're coming in."*



We've made our one-day contact lenses plastic neutral through our partnership with Plastic Bank.^{1,2}

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Healthy eye habits for kids



Eating healthy is important for vision,

so try to make sure your kids are eating the rainbow when it comes to fruits and veggies (easier said than done, we know). Try to include: avocado, beans, citrus fruits, sweet potatoes, leafy greens, eggs, fish, lean meat, poultry and sunflower seeds.



Encourage your kids to practice keeping hands away from their face and eyes.

Kids have a habit of rubbing their eyes but unfortunately it can cause eye infections and even damage to their corneas. Regular hand washing will also help reduce the risk of eye infections.



Limit screen time where possible. Here's a suggested guide for screen time limits based on age:

- 0 - 18 months old: limit screen use to video chatting with family and friends.
- 18 - 24 months: screen time should be limited to watching educational programming with a caregiver.
- 2 - 5 years old: limit non-educational screen time to about 1 hour per weekday and 3 hours on the weekend days.
- 6 and older: encourage healthy habits and limit activities that include screens.



Introduce fun activities centred around strengthening vision: drawing, painting, making jewellery with beads, jigsaw puzzles, playing catch and anything that encourages the development of hand-eye coordination.



Play outside often. Ideas to encourage kids to get outside include a scavenger hunt, flying kites, family bike rides, sidewalk chalk drawings, plant a garden, picking berries at a local farm, stargazing at night.



Wear protective eyewear for sports and games that pose risk of eye injuries.



Wear sunglasses when playing outside.



RECIPE FOR HEALTHY EYES: EGGPLANT AND TOMATO PASTA

This hearty Greek concoction makes a great main course on a winter's night. Tomatoes are full of vitamin C and contain lycopene, which has been shown by research to help prevent light damage to the retina. The eggplant isn't here just to add rich taste, it's also amazing for your vision: full of lutein, zeaxanthin, resveratrol, folic acid, vitamin C, and potassium, all of which make for healthier eyes.

Ingredients:

- 1 medium eggplant, peeled, cut into 1cm cubes
- Coarse salt (kosher or real salt)
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1/2 medium yellow onion, diced small
- 3-4 cloves garlic, minced
- 225g ground lamb
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp allspice
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 2 x 400g cans peeled and crushed tomatoes
- 300g penne pasta, cooked al dente (cook while sauce is simmering)
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh Italian parsley
- Parmesan cheese

Instructions:

1. To cut down on any bitterness and to reduce the amount of oil the eggplant will need, place the eggplant in a colander and season generously with the coarse salt.
2. Weigh down the eggplant and allow to sit for about 40 minutes (an easy way to do this is fill a large plastic zip-lock bag with water, seal tightly and place over the eggplant).
3. Rinse the salt off the eggplant and pat dry.
4. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large sauté pan over medium-high heat, add eggplant and cook, stirring often, until golden brown on all sides, about 20 minutes. Remove from pan and set aside.
5. Heat remaining oil in the same pan and sauté the onion, garlic, lamb, cinnamon, allspice, salt and pepper until the lamb is cooked.
6. Stir in the crushed tomatoes. Lower the heat and simmer until sauce has slightly thickened, about 15-20 minutes. Add back the eggplant pieces. Taste and adjust seasonings to taste.
7. Place pasta in a large serving bowl and pour the sauce over the pasta. Garnish with the chopped fresh parsley and sprinkle lightly with the grated parmesan cheese.

FUN FACT: An eggplant is actually a fruit – specifically a berry!