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Eye Health

Keeping your eyes in good shape is a big part of staying healthy. Follow these tips for healthy eyes and good eyesight.

1. Have a "dilated" eye exam

- This is the best way to make sure your eyes are healthy. Some people don't realize they could see better with glasses or contact lenses.

- Eye diseases such as glaucoma and diabetic eye disease have no warning signs, so a dilated eye exam is the only way to find them before they become bad.

2. Learn about your family's eye health

- Ask your family about their eye health. Many eye problems (like macular degeneration) run in families.

3. Eat right to protect your sight

- Eating lots of fruits and veggies, like dark leafy greens such as spinach or kale, can help to keep your eyes healthy.

- Fish high in omega-3 fatty acids (like salmon, arctic char, herring, lake trout, sardines, anchovies, and albacore tuna) are also good for eye health.

4. Stay at a healthy weight

- Being overweight raises your risk for diabetes and high blood pressure, which can cause eye harm or blindness.

5. Quit smoking or don't start

- Smoking is as bad for your eyes as it is for the rest of your body. It can raise your risk for many eye problems that can lead to blindness.

6. Wear sunglasses

- Sunglasses protect your eyes from the sun's harmful rays, which can raise your risk of cataracts. Buy sunglasses that block out 99 or 100 percent of UV-A and UV-B radiation.

7. Give your eyes a rest

- If you spend a lot of time at the computer or focusing on one thing, you sometimes forget to blink, and your eyes become tired.

- Use the 20-20-20 rule: "Each 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds." This will help lower eye strain.

8. Clean your contact lenses

- To lower infections, always wash your hands before putting in or taking out contact lenses. Clean contact lenses the right way and replace them as needed.

9. Keep your eyes safe at work

- Laws require employers to give you a safe work place. If you are supposed to wear protective eyewear as part of your job, always wear it.

Sources:

"Eye Health Tips"
National Eye Institute, **www.nei.nih.gov**

National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute,
www.nhlbi.nih.gov

For more information call Customer Service at **(415) 615-4555.**
Or visit **www.healthysanfrancisco.org**

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