

March 18, 2016

Dear Site Champion:

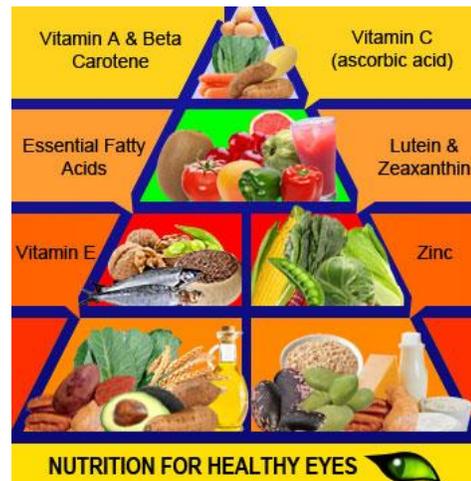


What's Happening

Next scheduled conference call is April 6 or 7, 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Central.

Weekly Wellness Insights

Many optometrists are expanding their traditional roles to include other areas that affect eye health, such as nutrition. According to the [American Optometric Association](#) research has shown that nutrition can impact the development of cataracts and age-related macular degeneration (AMD), which are the two leading causes of blindness and visual impairment among millions of Americans. Nutrition may be particularly important given that currently, treatment options after diagnosis for these eye diseases are limited.



There's no substitute for the quality of life good vision offers. Adding certain nutrients to your diet every day can help save your vision. Researchers have linked eye-friendly nutrients such as lutein/zeaxanthin, vitamin C, vitamin E and zinc to reducing the risk of certain eye diseases, including macular degeneration and cataract formation. Some examples of foods with these nutrients include;

Lutein/Zeaxanthin	Kale and Spinach
Vitamin C	Bell Peppers, Kiwi and broccoli
Vitamin E	Almonds and sunflower seeds
Zinc	Seafood, lean beef and poultry

Additionally, essential fatty acids have proven beneficial with eye health. Fats are a necessary part of the human diet. They maintain the integrity of the nervous system, fuel cells and boost the immune system. Two omega-3 fatty acids have been shown to be important for proper visual development and retinal function. Flaxseeds and walnuts are excellent sources.

March Health Observances

This week, we are highlighting [Eye Health and Safety month](#). According to the [Prevent Blindness organization](#) there are several healthy living habits which also promote healthy vision:

- **Avoid Smoking** - Quitting smoking can have many good effects on your health. Avoiding smoking can also protect the health of your eyes. By quitting smoking, you can help to possibly reduce your risk of developing several different types of eye diseases:
 - Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD)
 - Cataracts
 - Glaucoma
 - Quitting smoking will also reduce your risk of developing diabetic retinopathy if you are diabetic.
- **Eat Healthy Foods** - Lifelong good nutrition may lower your risk of some eye diseases. By eating a healthy, balanced diet, you will have a better chance of staying healthy and keeping your eyes healthy. A lifetime of healthy eating habits rich in certain dark green vegetables, such as spinach and kale, may reduce your risk of getting AMD. By eating healthy foods, you will lower your risk of developing other diseases, such as diabetes, which can lead to diabetic eye disease. Diabetes is also a risk factor for developing glaucoma.
- **Stay Active** - Staying active is part of a healthy lifestyle that can improve your overall health. Exercising regularly can reduce your risk of developing problems that can lead to eye disease. Talk to your PCP before starting an exercise program.
- **Control Your Blood Pressure** - Controlling your blood pressure is not just a good idea for your heart. It is also a good idea for protecting your eyesight. High blood pressure can increase your risk for glaucoma. It may also increase your risk for diabetic retinopathy if you have diabetes.
- **Protect Your Eyes from the Sun** - Wear proper eye protection and hats that block UV rays. UV rays can come from many directions. They radiate directly from the sun, but they are also reflected from the ground, from water, snow, sand and other bright surfaces.

Together we can encourage and enable employees to lead healthier, happier and more productive lives.

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