

Keep Your Sight Sharp at Every Age

Just like the rest of our bodies, our eyes have different needs as we age. That's why it's important to know which vision changes are a normal part of aging, and when something more serious may need the attention of an eye doctor.

Find out what to expect of your eyes in every era, discover proactive steps to preserve your healthy eye sight, and learn which corrective measures will help you see clearly and feel your best, no matter what your age!

Vision Changes in Your 20s and 30s

WHAT TO EXPECT

Generally speaking, adults in their 20s and 30s have healthy eyes and can effectively treat vision problems with corrective eyeglasses or contact lenses. But it's never too early to start preserving your eye health! During this stage of life, prevention is key.

TAKE ACTION

- Be sure to protect your healthy eyes from harmful everyday elements, like cigarette smoke and UV rays, which can increase your risk of age-related macular degeneration down the road.
- Be aware of occupational hazards, like long hours in front of computer monitors, which can lead to eyestrain and [Computer Vision Syndrome](#).
- Schedule an annual eye exam to keep your prescriptions up-to-date and avoid any long-term damage.

"Practice good health and safety habits," explains H. Chapman Leffingwell, OD, a VSP network doctor at [Ziegler Leffingwell Eyecare](#) in West Allis, WI. "Wearing sunglasses, eating right, and not smoking will help preserve your sight at any age."

Vision Changes in Your 40s

WHAT TO EXPECT

While preventative measures are vital to maintaining healthy eyes, vision changes are a natural part of the aging process. Presbyopia, a decline in your ability to focus due to the hardening of the lenses in your eyes, may become more noticeable in your 40s, making it more difficult to see while reading or doing close work.

TAKE ACTION

- In its earliest stages, merely adjusting the distance between your eyes and your reading material may help compensate for the effects of presbyopia.
- When adjusting your viewing range is no longer an option, corrective lenses, such as reading glasses or multifocal contact lenses, will be your best bet to help you see more clearly.

Vision Changes in Your 50s

WHAT TO EXPECT

As we age, the risk of contracting a number of age-related eye diseases—such as [glaucoma](#), [cataracts](#), and [macular degeneration](#)—will increase. "Glaucoma is one disease that's especially important to monitor," explains Dr. Leffingwell. "The harmful effects can increase in later years if it's not managed right away."

TAKE ACTION

- Monitor your vision and see your eye doctor if you notice any major vision changes.
- Have your eyes checked after other major health changes, such as a hypertension or diabetes diagnosis.
- While there is no cure for macular degeneration, healthy habits like taking multivitamins and eating foods rich in lutein and antioxidants can help slow the process down.

Vision Changes in Your 60s and Beyond

WHAT TO EXPECT

While cataracts are technically classified as an age-related eye disease, the condition is so common among older individuals, that they're considered a normal part of the aging process. "Cataracts will happen to all of us if we live long enough," explains Dr. Leffingwell. This impairment of the lens is caused by tiny clumps of protein molecules, which block light and dim your vision.

TAKE ACTION

- If cataracts start to impair your everyday activities, cataract surgery, in which your natural lens is replaced with an artificial lens, is a safe and effective way to restore your vision.
- Visit your optometrist at least once a year for a comprehensive eye exam and to screen for common age-related eye diseases.

No matter what your age, always monitor your vision changes, make healthy lifestyle and dietary choices, and [see your eye doctor for yearly eye exams](#) to keep your eyes healthy for years to come!