

# Eye on Health

## Nine Questions To Ask Your Ophthalmologist

(NAPS)—If you're like most people, this is a familiar scene: You're nearing the end of your appointment with your physician, and they ask, "Do you have any questions?" You want to take advantage of the short amount of time you have with the one person who can decipher tests and explain medical issues specific to you, but you blank.

Getting the most out of your regular eye exam depends on asking good questions. Not sure where to begin? Here's a list of smart questions to ask your ophthalmologist at your next eye exam:

- **Am I at risk for eye disease?** There are several risk factors for eye disease, including family history, ethnicity, age and so on. Take the time with your ophthalmologist to identify your own eye health risks.

- **Can my other health issues affect my eyes?** Several systemic diseases, including high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes, can affect eyesight. Your ophthalmologist is the best person to discuss how your medical history can lead to potential eye disease.

- **Why is this test being done?** During a routine eye exam, your ophthalmologist will run tests to screen for eye diseases and visual impairment. This can include checking how your pupil responds to light, measuring your eye pressure to screen for diseases such as glaucoma or dilating your eye to check the health of your retina.

- **Would you have this procedure yourself?** Some eye surgeries are urgently required to protect your vision but others are optional, such as laser eye surgery or just one of a range of treatment options for your condition. An ophthalmologist will be able to help you decide if you are a good candidate for surgery, walk you through the latest data, and discuss potential risks.

- **Is this normal?** Dealing with dry eyes? Noticing new floaters in your vision? Share these symptoms with your ophthalmologist. They can determine whether this is a normal part of aging or a sign of eye disease.

- **I can't see well while reading or driving. What should I do?** Usually, declining vision means you just need new glasses. But in some cases, there are alternatives to glasses that can improve your quality of life. If you're having a difficult time enjoying your favorite hobbies and activities, ask your ophthalmologist if you're a good candidate for



**It's smart to see your way clear to getting regular eye exams.**

newer vision correction options.

- **Will COVID-19 affect my eyes?** Your ophthalmologist is your best resource for the latest information on diseases related to the eye, including eye-related symptoms linked to COVID-19. If you're recovering from COVID-19, you may have concerns about how your eye health could be affected.

- **Should I buy blue light-blocking glasses? What about eye vitamins?** There are lots of myths out there about eyes and vision. Before buying blue light-blocking glasses or other over-the-counter products that are advertised to save your sight, get the facts straight from your ophthalmologist.

- **My eyesight seems fine. Do I really need to come back?** Your ophthalmologist can tell you how often you should be seen based on your age, risk factors and overall health.

The American Academy of Ophthalmology recommends all adults get a comprehensive eye exam by age 40 and every year or two after age 65, even if your vision seems fine. That's because leading causes of blindness can begin without any noticeable symptoms. An ophthalmologist—a physician who specializes in medical and surgical eye care—can help save your vision before it's too late.

### EyeCare America Can Help

If the cost of an eye exam is a concern, the American Academy of Ophthalmology's EyeCare America program may be able to help. This national public service program provides eye care through volunteer ophthalmologists for eligible seniors 65 and older and those at increased risk for eye disease.

### Learn More

For further information regarding EyeCare America and to see if you or someone you care for qualifies, visit [www.aao.org/eyecare-america](http://www.aao.org/eyecare-america).