

## WHEN TO SEE AN EYE M.D.

### EYE M.D.

An Eye M.D. is an ophthalmologist - a medical doctor (or DO) who specializes in eye and vision care. Eye M.D.s are specially trained to provide the full spectrum of eye care, from prescribing glasses and contact lenses to complex and delicate eye surgery.

Read below to see when you and your family should visit an Eye M.D. for a complete eye examination. Early detection and treatment of eye problems, along with protecting your eyes from accidental injury, are the best ways to take care of your vision throughout life.

If you have any of these risk factors for eye problems, you may need to see your Eye M.D. more often than recommended below:

- Family history of eye problems
- African American over age 40
- Diabetes
- History of eye injury

### BEFORE AGE 3

Since it is possible for your child to have a serious vision problem without being aware of it, your child should have his or her eyes screened during regular pediatric appointments. Vision testing is recommended for all children starting around 3 years of age.

If there is a family history of vision problems or if your child appears to have any of the following conditions speak to your Eye M.D. promptly about when and how often your child's eyes should be examined:

- **Strabismus** (crossed eyes)
- **Amblyopia** (lazy eye)
- **Ptosis** (drooping of the upper eyelid)

### AGE 3 TO 19

To ensure your child's or teenager's eyes remain healthy, he or she should have his or her eyes screened every one to two years during regular check-up appointments.

### AGE 20 TO 39

Most young adults have healthy eyes, but they still need to take care of their vision by wearing protective eyewear when playing sports, doing yard work, working with chemicals or taking part in other activities that could cause an eye injury.

Have a complete eye exam at least once between the ages of 20 and 29 and at least twice between the ages of 30 and 39.

Also, be aware of symptoms that could indicate a problem. See an Eye M.D. if you experience any eye conditions, such as:

- Visual changes or pain
- Flashes of light
- Seeing spots or ghost-like images
- Lines appear distorted or wavy
- Dry eyes with itching and burning

### AGE 40 TO 64

The adult and middle-aged groups can be affected by eye problems. Preventive measures should be taken to protect eyes from injury and detect disease early. Schedule an eye exam with your Eye M.D. every two to four years.

### AGE 65 AND OVER

Seniors age 65 and over should have complete eye exams by their Eye M.D. every one to two years to check for cataracts, glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy and other eye conditions.

*See your Eye M.D. ... because there's so much more to see.*

For more  
information  
or to find an  
Eye M.D., visit  
[www.aao.org](http://www.aao.org)