



# Eye Essentials

## **Eye Care – Myths and Facts.**

Eyes are one of the most important organs in the human body and vision is one of the most wonderful gifts. But often many people neglect the importance of eye care and don't pay proper attention towards eye care, only to regret later on in life. To compound the problem, there are various myths circulating around, since ages, regarding eye diseases and eye care which have become the so called "truth" for the common man. As an ophthalmologist (eye care specialist), it is our duty to rectify those misconceptions and bring out the actual facts for all to know.

1. **"Computerized Eye checkup in an Optical Shop is all that is enough." Myth / False**  
Computerized Eye checkup can only determine the refractive error (glass number) of a patient that is only a small part of a complete eye checkup. There are various important things that need to be examined like anterior segment (front part of the eye), retina evaluation, eye pressure, visual field checkup etc., which can only be done by a qualified eye surgeon to completely assess the health of your eye. In, otherwise normal individual, regular complete eye checkup should be done at least once a year.
2. **"Computers will not damage your eyes' Fact / Truth**  
Today is the world of computers/ technology. No one can avoid the benefits of computers. World is becoming small due to fast growing technology. Using computers will certainly not harm our eyes, but one needs to follow certain healthy guidelines to prevent eye strain or fatigue that can develop with improper, prolonged periods of close computer work. UV rays emitting from the computers are harmful to the eye. Also decrease in the blinking rate while working on the computer causes dryness of the eyes. If these problems are not corrected, it can cause Computer Vision Syndrome. It can cause redness, watering, burning, itching, eye strain, headache, tiredness.

As we say **Prevention is better than cure.**

Proper sitting posture, appropriate placement of the monitor and key board, adequate and proper lighting, anti-glare screen, eye exercise, voluntary blinking (12 to 15 times per minute), regular washing of eyes with cold/tap water and regular short breaks (20-20-20 rule i.e. take short breaks of 20 seconds at every 20 minutes and look at the object that is situated at least 20 feet away). Following this routine regularly in day to day life will prevent eye damage due to computers.

3. **"Eating Carrots will help in reducing spectacle number and increase the vision" Myth/ False**  
Carrots are rich in Vitamin A, which is essential for sight; however a well-balanced diet provides all the nutrients necessary for good vision. Carrots, Spinach, Green leafy vegetables, papaya, mango, milk, cod liver oil etc. are rich in Vitamin A. But carrots or any of the above mentioned food items have no role in the increase or decrease in spectacle number. In young age, in otherwise normal eyes, change in spectacle number is related to shape and size of the eyeball and there are no nutrients or medicines that can decrease the eye number.

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4. **“Complete bed rest is needed following cataract surgery” Myth/ False**  
In older days cataract was removed through a big incision which needed at least 5-6 stitches and healing occurred over next 5-6 weeks and so bed rest was advised for at least 1 month to aid healing. Today due to advanced technology and skills, cataract is removed by Phacoemulsification technique through a micro-incision and replaced by foldable intraocular lens without need for any stitches. The patient can resume his/her normal activities within few days depending on the condition of healing and on the advice of their concerned ophthalmologist. Today, cataract surgery can be performed during any time of the year and no season is a bad time for cataract surgery.
5. **“Cataract should be removed only after it is fully ripe” Myth/ False**  
In olden days, cataracts were removed only after they were fully ripped because of the technique of surgery and stitches that were needed to be taken. Patients used to be practically blind due to fully ripped cataract, before they underwent surgery.  
Now, with the advancement of techniques, skills and technology, it is advisable to get cataract operated the moment it starts to interfere with one’s daily routine activities.
6. **“Diabetes doesn’t affect eye” Myth/ False**  
Diabetes is the second most common cause of treatable blindness after cataract. Diabetes affects the retina (back portion of the eye) causing damage to the retina and its blood vessels. It causes weakness in small blood vessels that starts leaking blood. If the early stage goes unnoticed and untreated, it can lead to permanent blindness. Hence proper control of diabetes and regular eye checkup is mandatory to prevent permanent loss of vision in a diabetic patient.
7. **“Squint should not be operated” “Squint is a sign of good luck” Myth/ False**  
Squint is misalignment of the two eyes, wherein both eyes are not looking in the same direction. It is not related to any curse or good luck.  
Glasses, Patching and Surgery are the treatment options available.  
It should be treated as early as possible, any time after 6 months of age depending on the onset of squint. Not only it’s a cosmetic problem, but if left untreated it can cause decrease in vision, lazy eye syndrome and decrease in depth perception (3- dimensional vision). Squint surgery don’t cause decrease in vision in fact it helps in improving binocular vision. Hence it should be treated as early as possible. Earlier the better.
8. **“Lasik/ Laser Vision correction is safe: Fact/ True**  
Lasik is about freedom from glasses and contact lenses. It is the most frequently performed surgery today. More than 20 million people have undergone Lasik surgery, throughout the world. More than 98% of patients undergoing Lasik will never require any form of glass correction following Lasik surgery. It is a safe procedure to reduce dependence on glasses or contact lenses.