

KNOW YOUR EYES



Eye Care For You

Healthy eyes can enhance your quality of life and add to the joy of living. By reading this brochure you will learn important facts about your eyes. The few minutes you will spend reading it, may prove to be the most important time in your own life or even that of a loved one or friend.

Are your eyes normal and healthy?

Have you ever considered that your eyes may not be normal? Can you be sure that your eyes are healthy?

Are you one of the thousands of people living with an undiagnosed eye condition?

New discoveries and technological improvements take place in the field of ophthalmology (eye diseases and dysfunctions) all the time. Your ophthalmologist (eye specialist) is best informed about such matters.

Symptoms that may not be ignored!

The following are indications that your eyes are not normal and healthy.

Emergencies

The following are emergencies and require urgent attention from your general practitioner or ophthalmologist.

- Sudden blindness or very poor vision lasting longer than half an hour.
- A curtain in front of the eye.
- Severe pain in one eye with a simultaneous headache on the same side.
- Any (serious) eye injury.
- Alkaline or acid-burns of the eye.

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Other abnormalities.

The following symptoms require a normal routine visit to your family doctor or ophthalmologist.

- Gradual deterioration of vision in one or both eyes.
- Eye/ Eyes that water constantly.
- Discharge from the eye.
- Painful eye/ eyes.
- Persistent red eye / eyes.
- Periodic blurred vision.
- Poor vision in bright or dim light.
- Floating objects, which appear to move in front of the eyes.
- A distorted pupil.
- A "white" pupil.
- Eyes that do not open or close properly.
- Eyelids that appear abnormal.
- Prominent swelling around the eye.
- Protrusion of the eye / eyes.
- Poor vision that cannot be restored to 100% by the prescription of glasses.

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Children and their eyes.

- All children should undergo a routine ophthalmologic examination at 3 years of age and again just before starting school.
- Thereafter routine examinations should follow ever 5 years.
- Children under the age of 8 years should only be examined and treated by a medical doctor or by a non-medical eye care practitioner in close collaboration with a medical doctor.
- Children under the age of 8 years, with minor symptoms, may in fact have a serious eye condition, and should consult an ophthalmologist.
- Strabismus (crossed eyes) in children under the age of 8 years, may result in blindness, these children must consult an ophthalmologist. At the age of 3 months a child with strabismus will not outgrow this condition.
- Children under 8 years of age may suffer ocular damage from an incorrect pair of spectacles.
- Healthy children on a normal diet require no additional vitamins for their eyes.

Adults and their eyes.

- Up to the age of 40 you should visit your ophthalmologist every 5 years for a routine examination.
- Any person over 40 can have increased eye pressure without being aware of it in any way.
- From the age of 40 to 65 routine examinations are advised every 3 years.
- Everyone over 65 should visit their ophthalmologist every year or at least every two years.

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Who and what is an ophthalmologist.

An ophthalmologist is a medical eye specialist. Ophthalmologist are thus medical doctors who have undergone further specialist training to diagnose and treat all eye diseases and dysfunctions. Should you not know your nearest ophthalmologist, kindly ask your family doctor.

Training of an ophthalmologist.

An ophthalmologist first trains as a general practitioner i.e. 6 years training at medical school and 1 year of post graduate hospital training. After working for at least one year as a general practitioner a further 4 years of specialization in ophthalmology (eye diseases and disorders) follows at a medical school – a total of 12 years.

Who can refer you to an ophthalmologist?

You may visit your ophthalmologist without a referral.

OR:

You may also be referred by:

- Your family doctor or a general practitioner.
- Other medical specialists.
- Optometrist (tests and supplies glasses and contact lenses)
- Othoptist (assists ophthalmologist with squint cases)
- Optical dispenser / optician
- Ophthalmic medical assistant.
- Occupational therapist
- Registered nurse

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Competency of an ophthalmologist

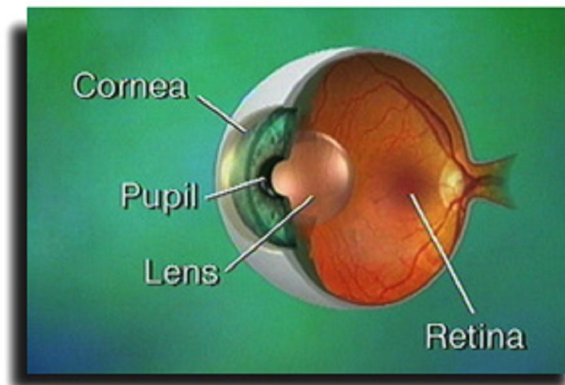
An ophthalmologist provides complete eye care and is specially trained to, inter alia:

- Detect and treat diseases that may cause blindness
- Perform eye operations.
- Treat eyes with laser equipment
- Test eyes for spectacles and supply contact lenses.

An ophthalmologist is therefore trained to provide any medical, surgical or optical treatment of the eye.

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The Eyeball:



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