



March is National Nutrition Month and Save Your Vision Month. For our Blog this month we will address ways to keep your eyes healthy and happy by incorporating healthy foods and practices.

According to WebMD there are six main tips for keeping your eyes healthy and happy. The first is to eat well. Besides helping you stay at a healthy weight, a well-balanced diet lowers your odds of obesity and diabetes, which is the leading cause of blindness in adults. To give you a list of some foods to add in your diet, I reached out to our staff dietician, Aimee Lynch.

As you can't get all the recommended nutrients you need from medication alone, she has created a comprehensive list for foods that are good for eye health:

1. Eggs-excellent source of Vitamin C, Vitamin E, Zinc, Lutein, and Zeaxanthin to prevent age-related vision loss such as cataracts or macular degeneration.
2. Fish (especially salmon) - are rich sources of Omega-3 Fatty Acids that help maintain the health of the retina and prevent dry eyes.
3. Citrus fruits (oranges, lemons) - are rich in vitamin C and can help contribute to healthy blood vessels in your eyes and fight age-related eye damage.
4. Nuts, seeds, and legumes (beans) - are rich in Omega-3 Fatty Acids and are a good source of Vitamin E to help maintain good eye health and protect the eye from cataracts.
5. Leafy Green Vegetables (spinach, kale, collards) - are a good source of Vitamin C and also rich in Lutein and Zeaxanthin which help to prevent serious eye conditions.
6. Carrots- are rich in Vitamin A which is a component of a protein called rhodopsin which helps the retina to absorb light.
7. Dairy products (such as milk and yogurt) - contain Vitamin A and the mineral Zinc which protect the cornea and retina.
8. Sweet potatoes- are a good source of beta carotene which is converted to Vitamin A and can help prevent dry eyes, night blindness, and reduce the risk of eye infections.

The next tip, according to WebMD is to quit smoking. Smoking makes you more likely to develop cataracts, damage to your optic nerve, and develop macular degeneration. There are many programs out there that can help you kick the habit for good, check with your doctor for information.

Another great tip is to wear sunglasses. Too much UV exposure boosts chances of cataracts and macular degeneration. Choose a pair of shades that have 99-100% UV blockers, wrap around lenses, and polarized lenses to help reduce glare. While we are on the subject of eye wear, tip four is to make sure you wear safety eyewear when using hazardous or airborne materials or playing sports.

One tip that most do not think of these days is to look away from the computer screen from time to time. Take regular breaks, utilize anti-glare devices for screens and eye glasses. Staring too long at the screen can cause issues such as eyestrain, blurry vision, trouble focusing at a distance, dry eyes, headaches, and pain in the neck, back and shoulders.

Last but not least is to visit your eye doctor regularly. Regular check-ups are an important part of making sure your eyes stay healthy. These visits detect diseases and monitor age related changes.

Remember to eat well and stay healthy.