

# Taking care of your vision

Healthy eyes lead to a better quality of life. That's why having a full eye exam is important. Be aware of how your eyes look and feel. Eighty percent of vision problems can be avoided and many can be cured if you catch them early.

## When Should You Get a Full Eye Exam?

A full eye exam helps diagnose causes of vision problems. Vision screenings do not get to the root of the problem. Here are guidelines of when to get a full eye exam:

- Infants should have their first full eye exam at 6 months old
- Children should have a full eye exam at 3 years old and before starting kindergarten
- After the age of 6, children and adults should receive a full eye exam every year
- Your eye doctor may recommend additional visits

Many illnesses and conditions affect vision. Even if you think you can see clear it is still important to have a full eye exam each year.

## What Is a Full Eye Exam?

A full eye exam takes 30 to 60 minutes. Your doctor may ask if you had any changes or problems since your last exam. Know your family history and share it with your doctor. A full eye exam usually includes:

- **Dilated eye exam:** Through use of special lenses or drops your doctor will look closely at the nerves in your eye
- **Refraction test:** This helps determine how sharp your vision is close up and far away
- **Visual field test:** This happens to gauge how well you see on the outer edges of your vision

## Signs You Need to See Your Eye Doctor Right Away.

You should visit your eye doctor any time you think you might have an eye infection. Ignoring signs of infection can cause lasting damage to your eyes and sight. Signs of eye infection can include:

- Continual redness
- Pain
- Eye discharge
- Watery eyes
- Dry eyes
- Light sensitivity
- Swollen eyes
- Swelling around the eyes
- Persistent itching
- Blurry vision

There are many different types of eye infections. Your doctor will need to determine what type you have to treat your infection. Don't wait until it's too late to take care of your eyes!

