

## Summer Edition Parish Nurse Corner - Healthy Vision

“The Lord has given us eyes to see with and ears to listen with” Proverbs 20:12 GNT Catholic Ed.  
There is a lots you can do to keep your eyes healthy!

### Are you at Risk of Eye Disease?

You are more at risk of eye disease if you are:

- Have a family history of eye disease such as cataracts or age-related macular degeneration
- If you have health conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, or are overweight
- If you are of African American, Hispanic or Aboriginal descent



### Ten tips to keep your eyes healthy:

1. **Eat right to protect your sight:** Eating lots of fruits and vegetables, especially leafy green vegetables such as spinach, kale and collard greens, in addition to fish such as salmon, tuna and halibut has been shown to have beneficial effects on your eyes.
2. **Get moving:** Regular exercise to maintain a healthy body weight and prevent diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol levels, which can result in vision problems.
3. **Speak up if your vision changes:** Is your vision blurry or are you squinting to see clearly? These are signs that your vision should be checked by a qualified professional. A dilated eye examination is the only way to diagnose eye diseases early on.
4. **Wear your glasses:** If you are prescribed glasses to improve your vision, wear them as prescribed. Young children may need to be taught how to clean and store their glasses.
5. **Keep germs away:** Wash your hands before putting them close to your eyes. If you wear contact lenses, wash your hands before putting them in or taking them out. Disinfect your contact lenses and replace them regularly.
6. **Gear up:** Before playing your favourite sport, doing construction work or home repairs, wear safety glasses or goggles to protect your eyes.
7. **Wear your shades:** Choose sunglasses that block 99 – 100% of UVA and UVB rays. Never look directly at the sun. Wear sunglasses even on cloudy days.
8. **20/20/20 rule:** Do you spend a lot of time looking at the computer, phone or television screen? Rest your eyes: every 20 minutes, look 20 feet away for 20 seconds.
9. **Say no to smoking:** Smoking can increase your risk of cataracts, macular degeneration and harm the nerve (optic nerve) that takes images from the eye to the brain.
10. **Talk about your eyes with your family:** Talking about it will help you be aware of eye problems other family members have encountered as many eye diseases run in families.

### Other Resources:

- **National Eye Institute:** short videos on other eye questions:  
<https://www.nei.nih.gov/learn-about-eye-health/nei-for-kids/ask-scientist-video-series>
- **Information on Contact Lens Health:** <https://www.cdc.gov/contactlenses/protect-your-eyes.html>
- **Canadian National Institute for the Blind:** <https://cnib.ca/en/sight-loss-info/your-eyes/eye-health?region=on>

Faye Brekelmans, Parish Nurse