

# Eye Health

## The importance of protecting your vision



Eyesight is the most precious of the human senses. It is a key to happiness, independence and opportunity. Over the past 20 years, we and the world around us have become more and more dependent on visual information driven by the Internet and the digital revolution.

Dry or fatigued eyes and other serious conditions are on the rise. New research has revealed that 81% of British adults worry about protecting their sight (see [www.optegra.com/VOB](http://www.optegra.com/VOB)).

Yet, many neglect simple but important regular eye health checks. Adults should have their eyes assessed by an eye healthcare professional at least every two years, or if they notice any changes in their vision.

### Momentous advances and new possibilities are now readily available

Over the past two decades, ophthalmology has experienced a surge of innovation. With increasingly active and demanding lifestyles, we can now safely decide to enhance and

#### Groups more at risk of eye disease (Annual check recommended)

- Aged over 50 years
- Diabetics
- Family history of glaucoma or other eye disease
- Glasses or contact lenses wearers

protect our sight and improve our quality of life by getting rid of contact lenses and glasses. We can do this with refractive lens surgery and laser eye surgery—medical techniques that have become very safe and minimally invasive. Over 25 million people have benefitted from these treatments.

#### Did you know that...

...typically, between the age of 21 and 50 you can correct your vision with 'keyhole' laser eye surgery? SMILE is a bladeless, flapless, minimally invasive alternative to laser eye surgery.

...the natural lens clouding that leads to cataract formation starts as early as age 40-45? You can now have one procedure to remove not only your cataract, but also correct your vision so that you no longer need glasses or contact lenses. Lens replacement can fix all of this in one go.

#### Technology makes more medical conditions treatable

A surprising number of people have serious eye conditions such as age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and glaucoma, but are not yet aware of them because symptoms may not appear in the early stages of the condition.

Approximately 600,000 people in the UK are living with diabetes, which is the leading cause of sight loss, but few are aware of the risks. The NHS provides annual checks for diabetics and it is important for them to be completed.

The introduction of new kinds of medications (such as Anti-VEGF, which

stands for 'anti vascular endothelial growth factor') and the development of an imaging test that takes cross-section pictures of your retina, have allowed the early diagnostic and management of previously untreatable eye conditions, such as wet-AMD.

#### Visit an optician or ophthalmologist if you notice any of the following changes to your vision

- Wavy lines or distorted vision
- Sudden loss or deterioration of vision
- Flashes of light and floaters
- Double vision
- Persistent pain
- Persistent sensitivity to light, especially sunlight

London is a world-class hub for eye healthcare. Residents have access to several centres of excellence in ophthalmology. From Moorfields to Optegra Eye Health Care, there are several prestigious and specialised eye hospitals offering the full range of eye health services. These include vision correction (laser and lens replacement) and treatment of all medical conditions, including cataract, glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration, retinal and diabetic eye problems. We are lucky to have so many resources so readily available to us and we should take advantage of them!

**Mr Robert Morris** is a Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon and Medical Director at Optegra Eye Health Care. Find out more at [www.optegra.com](http://www.optegra.com).