

Sun's Damaging Rays Go Beyond Skin Deep Protecting Your Eyes Is A Must-Do This Summer

(NAPSA)—As summer approaches, there are constant reminders to protect your skin from the sun's damaging rays. But did you know that your eyes could be in danger, too?

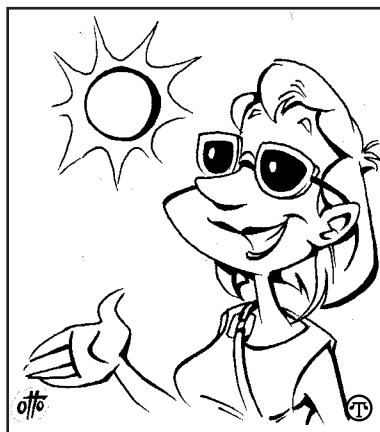
According to American Academy of Ophthalmology, evidence has shown that repeated exposure to the sun's rays can contribute to the development of eye disorders that commonly occur as we age, such as cataracts and age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

Unknown to many, AMD is the leading cause of blindness in people over 50. AMD causes the loss of central vision, making daily activities such as reading, driving or recognizing faces nearly impossible. Early detection is critical for successful treatment of AMD, so annual eye exams are key. In addition to annual eye exams, evidence shows that protecting your eyes from repeated exposure to the sun's harmful rays can help reduce the risk of AMD.

What causes the sun's rays to be so damaging to your eyes? The most common answer is ultraviolet radiation, which is energy from the sun that reaches the earth as ultraviolet (UV) rays. Two forms of UV rays are responsible for premature aging, wrinkling, skin cancer and possibly AMD. In addition to UV rays, many researchers believe blue/high energy visible (HEV) light may also be one of the factors in developing AMD. Unlike UV rays, blue/HEV light can get to the retina. It is through the retina that stimulation of light occurs, initiating the sensation of vision.

How can you protect your vision from these rays? Wear sunglasses every day.

Here are a few tips for select-



ing the proper type of sunglasses to protect your eyes from both UV rays and blue/HEV light:

- Make sure to select sunglasses that block 99 to 100 percent of UV rays; don't depend on the darkness of the lenses to determine the amount of UV protection—the two aren't related.
- Choose sunglasses that wrap to the side to protect your eyes from all angles.
- Make sure your sunglasses are "blue-blocking." Blue-blocking lenses usually appear amber and make your surroundings look yellow or orange; the tint makes distant objects appear more distinct.
- Even if your contact lenses have UV protection, you still need to wear sunglasses. The effectiveness of these UV-absorbing lenses protecting against eye disorders has not been proven.
- Wear your sunglasses every day—even if it's cloudy. The sun's damaging rays can pass through thin clouds and haze.

For more information about healthy eyesight or AMD, please call 1-888-633-2167 and speak to a live operator or visit www.amdfacts.com.