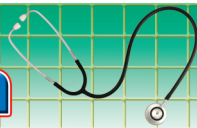


Eye on Health



EyeCare America Helps Save Seniors' Sight

(NAPSA)—It's a fact of life. When people reach their senior years, they are at high risk for developing age-related eye diseases that can lead to blindness if not caught and treated in time.

The good news is that people can take steps to protect themselves. The first step is to get a simple, painless eye exam by an ophthalmologist, the medical doctors that detect and treat these conditions. To help seniors who haven't seen an ophthalmologist in three or more years, the American Academy of Ophthalmology's EyeCare America program may be able to help.

This public service program has been matching Americans 65 and older with volunteer ophthalmologists across the country for more than 30 years. EyeCare America volunteers provide eligible seniors with medical eye exams often at no out-of-pocket cost, and up to one year of follow-up care for any condition diagnosed during the initial exam for the physician services. The program also offers a glaucoma eye exam to eligible, uninsured individuals who are at increased risk for glaucoma, determined by their age, race and family history. Visit www.aaof.org/eyecare-america to see if you or a loved one is eligible.

Other Ways EyeCare America Can Help: Drug Discounts

Connecting people with a volunteer ophthalmologist isn't the only way EyeCare America helps seniors. It can also help people deal with the challenges of affording prescription medications. This can be helpful, especially to seniors who may live on a fixed income.

EyeCare America's new drug discount card can help people save up to 80 percent on drug costs. It can be used as often as needed at over 65,000 pharmacies nationwide, including all major chains. The card can also be shared with



You may be able to improve your sight and get a free eye exam.

friends and family. It's free, with no fees or registration, and it never expires. Download the card today and start saving by visiting the Assistance with Medications page at www.aaof.org/eyecare-america.

How Often To Have Eye Exams

The American Academy of Ophthalmology recommends that people 65 and older get medical eye exams with an ophthalmologist on an annual basis. Through comprehensive eye exams, ophthalmologists can check a person's eyes for hidden signs of eye disease, which may have no noticeable symptoms in their early stages. Once diagnosed, ophthalmologists can provide treatments to help prevent vision loss. Learn more about eye diseases and conditions and how to protect your sight at www.aaof.org/eyesmart.

A recent Harris Poll commissioned by the Academy revealed that nearly two out of three American adults report having eye or vision problems. Despite this, many are neglecting these important sight-saving exams, even when they have signs of vision problems. The most commonly cited reason is cost or lack of insurance.

EyeCare America has helped more than 1.8 million people since 1985. Its sight-saving services are made possible through the generous support of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc., with additional support provided by Alcon.