



# Eye on Health

## Protect Your Eyes From Ultraviolet Rays Year-Round

(NAPSA)—Here's eye-opening news: While wearing sunglasses to protect against the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays may not seem necessary during cloudy, cold-weather months, harmful UV rays that can damage your eyes are actually present all year-round. Like your skin, your eyes can also be sunburned, which can cause blurred vision, redness, tearing and temporary vision loss. Exposure to UV rays may also contribute to the development of long-term vision conditions, such as cataracts, macular degeneration and, in some cases, skin cancer on and around the eyelids.

In fact, light actually intensifies as it passes through the eyes and is 22 times stronger at the outer edges of the eyes and eight times stronger at the inner edges of the eyes. These are the most common places for pterygium (a thin tissue over the white part of the eye) and cataracts to develop, both of which are associated with chronic UV exposure.

Children's eyes are especially sensitive to UV exposure, and it's never too early for them to wear proper sun protection. In a study published in *Review of Optometry*, vision changes due to UV damage were found in children as young as age 9. What's more, 71 percent of parents reported they do not ensure that their children wear sunglasses outdoors, according to a recent survey conducted by the American Optometric Association.



**It's a bright idea to protect your eyes from harmful UV rays all year-round.**

To protect your eyes from sun damage throughout the year, consider the following:

- Wear protective eyewear that blocks 99 to 100 percent of UVA and UVB rays.
- Consider adaptive eyeglass lenses, such as Transitions lenses, which automatically adjust the level of darkness to help reduce distracting glare, minimize eye fatigue and block 100 percent of UV rays.
- Remember to also wear a wide-brimmed hat and use plenty of sunscreen.
- Visit your doctors regularly for health checkups, including your eye doctor for a comprehensive eye exam.

To learn more about how to protect your eyes from UV exposure, talk to your eye doctor and visit [www.transitions.com](http://www.transitions.com).