July is Healthy Vision Month

The month of July is recognized as Healthy Vision Month by the National Eye Institute, and it is an important opportunity to remind families and individuals to check on their eye health. Our eye health tends to get overlooked when compared to our physical or mental health, which are indeed crucial to living a happier and more comfortable lifestyle. Having poor eye health can also severely affect our everyday lives down to the simplest tasks. While an individual may not notice any irregular function with their eyesight, it is still important to visit an optometrist for yearly assessments and evaluations just like you would for your primary care physician.

Some people are more susceptible to poor eye health than others and need to know if they fall into that category so they know to prioritize it. Some of these people may include individuals who have a family history of issues with eye health.
There are diseases that link directly to poor eye health or can be considered an indication of future problems to eyesight which can include:

- Cataracts, a clouding of the eye.
- Diabetic retinopathy, which causes damage to the blood vessels in the back of the eye.
- Glaucoma, damage to the optic nerve, often with increased eye pressure.
- Age-related macular degeneration, which gradually affects central vision.

While it may be easier to notice and assess eye health as an adult, this may sometimes be overlooked in younger children. This can be a problem because it’s important to find these problems as early as possible, so that appropriate treatments like eyewear or other resources can be provided.

**Healthy Vision Month**

**Tips For Maintaining Eye Health**

- Schedule Regular Eye Exams
- Protect Your Eyes From UV Rays
- Take Regular Breaks From Screens
- Understand Your Family History
- Follow a Healthy Diet

**Did you know that having 20/20 vision does not mean your eyes are perfect? It only means that you have excellent central vision. Other types of vision, such as night vision, side vision, or color vision may be imperfect.**
Ways to Protect Your Eyes

Periodical appointments with eye-health professionals can include performing assessments to determine eye health, treatments to improve eye health, and precautionary measures against any symptoms that can affect eyesight. Besides meeting with professionals, there are plenty of tips provided by the National Eye Institute that anyone can follow:

1. **Eat right to protect your sight.** Keep your eyes healthy by eating a well-balanced diet. Load up on different types of fruits and veggies, especially leafy greens like spinach, kale, and collard greens. Fish like salmon, tuna, and halibut have been shown to help your eyes, too.
2. **Get moving.** Being overweight or obese can put you at higher risk for diabetes and other conditions that can lead to vision problems.
3. **Speak up if your vision changes.** Is your vision blurry? Do you squint a lot? Schedule regular eye exams and let your optometrist know if your eyes are bothering you or if you notice any changes in your vision.
4. **Keep the germs away.** Always wash your hands before putting them close to your eyes, especially if you’re putting in or taking out contact lenses.
5. **Wear your glasses.** Your glasses help you see better, especially when they’re clean and free of smudges.
6. **Gear up.** Wear the right protection to keep your eyes safe when necessary. Many eye injuries can be prevented with better safety habits, such as using protective eyewear.
7. **Wear your shades.** The sun’s rays can hurt your eyes. Choose sunglasses that block 99% or 100% of both UVA and UVB radiation from the sun. And remember, you should never look directly at the sun.
8. **Give your eyes a break.** Do you spend a lot of time looking at a computer, phone, or TV screen? Give your eyes a rest with the 20-20-20 rule: Every 20 minutes, look about 20 feet away for 20 seconds.
9. **Say no to smoking.** Did you know that smoking is as bad for your eyes as it is the rest of your body? Smoking can put you at risk for some pretty serious eye issues, which can lead to blindness.
10. **Talk about it.** Does anyone in your family have issues with their eyes? Talking about eye health with your family can help all of you stay healthy.

Health Observances
Throughout the year, there are countless health observances that raise awareness for a variety of conditions (both big and small) and remind consumers to be proactive and stay on top of their health.

Month-Long Observances:
- Cord Blood Awareness Month
- Group B Strep Awareness Month
- Sarcoma Awareness Month
- UV Safety Month

Days to Notes:
July 28: World Hepatitis Day
Tomato and Orange Salsa

What You Need:

- 3 cups chopped ripe tomatoes
- 1 small red onion, diced small
- 1 large red onion, diced small
- 1 large red or green jalapeño, seeded, diced small
- 1/2 cup loosely packed chopped fresh cilantro leaves
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 medium oranges, skin and pit removed, segmented and chopped
- salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- 4 tbsp juice of about 2-3 fresh limes
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

To Make:

1. Combine the ingredients in a mixing bowl and mix well. Allow to sit for about 15 minutes before serving. Keep leftovers covered and chilled up to one day.

Did you know...?

**Tomatoes** are rich in anti-oxidants, which are important to eye health. This fruit grows best in warm environments, especially during the spring and summer months.

Tomatoes can be prepared in many ways including this month's recipe as well as steamed, boiled, and roasted.

**Tomatoes are a great source of:**

- **Vitamin A:** supports the eye’s structure
- **Vitamin C:** slows age-related vision loss
- **Vitamin K:** builds strong bones

Sources/For More Info:

- National Eye Institute
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Visit the Healthy Fontana booth at one (or all) of these upcoming events for FREE resources and giveaways!

- **Thursdays, July 6th, 13th, 20th, & 27th:** Fontana Farmers' Market, 2pm-7pm, Southridge Park (Don Day Center Parking Lot)
- **Sundays, July 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, & 30th:** Fontana Farmers' Market, 10am-3pm, Fontana Park
- **Saturday, July 8th:** Fontana Walks!, 7am, Mary Vagle Nature Center
- **Thursday, July 27th:** Fontana Walks!, 6pm, Southridge Park

Looking for ways to be more active, but don't know how or have the resources?

The Healthy Fontana team is here to support you and help provide you with resources on how to be a healthier version of yourself. For more information about Healthy Fontana or the programs available to you, visit the Healthy Fontana website or connect with us via one of the ways below!

Connect with Healthy Fontana
Community Services Department
16860 Valencia Ave | Fontana, CA 92335
Hotline: (909) 350-6542 | healthy@fontanaca.gov