

EYE EXAMS FOR SENIORS....



Dr. Perry Arndt

Who needs the most eye care? Seniors. Why? By age 65, 1-in-3 Americans have some form of vision-impairing eye disease. Most however do not know it because often there's no warning symptoms or they assume that poor sight is a natural part of the aging process. By detecting and treating eye disease early through annual, dilated eye exams, seniors can preserve their sight. Here in the United States we see four common eye diseases that face seniors. They are cataracts, glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration (ARMD) and diabetic retinopathy. As with any health concern, it's better to catch it early than wait until symptoms occur. Also one very good reason to make sure you have an annual eye examination.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR EYE EXAMINATION

There are several ways that eye care professionals monitor patients for glaucoma. Because high pressure can be a risk factor for glaucoma, measurements are made for the intra ocular pressure. Sometimes further tests of the optic nerve and peripheral vision are useful in monitoring glaucoma.



Following dilation of the eyes, your eye care professional will use a microscope to give a clear view of the retina. The part of the retina that provides detailed, central vision is called the macula. Through this assessment, eye care professionals can determine the presence or absence of ARMD.



Since diabetes is a vascular disease, it can affect the blood vessels of the retina. When the retinal blood vessels change, it is called diabetic retinopathy. It is important for all diabetics to have annual dilated eye exams to evaluate the retinas closely.

Unlike glaucoma, ARMD, and diabetic retinopathy, cataracts rarely pose any real health concern for the eye. However, cataracts can interfere with vision. Therefore, dilated eye exams are useful in determining if a patient will benefit from cataract surgical consult.

An annual eye examination for seniors is important. If you have questions regarding when your last eye examination was, be sure to contact your eye doctor.

Dr. Perry Arndt is an optometrist at HealthView Eye Care Center-Medford. For more information on eye examinations, you can contact him at (715)748-2020 or 866-748-2020.