

Your Vision, Your Health

Why Vision Care Matters

As your employer, we care about your health and safety at work. That includes taking care of your eyes. We've partnered with our advisor and the Canadian Association of Optometrists (CAO), which represents more than 7,500 optometrists across Canada, to share up-to-date information about vision care and how to use your vision benefits wisely.

Vision Loss is Common – and Preventable with Early Detection

- Approximately **20%** of Canadians have an eye disease that could lead to vision loss or blindness.
- **90%** of vision loss can be prevented if eye diseases are found and treated early.

Common Eye Health Issues

Many serious eye health conditions start with no noticeable symptoms. You may think you “see fine” while damage is already happening without you knowing. Some common issues are:



Myopia (near-sightedness) – Linked to screen time and less outdoor time

- Becoming more common, especially in children and young adults.
- High (strong) myopia increases the risk of serious eye problems later in life if not managed.



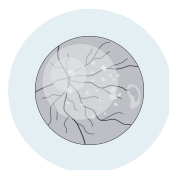
Glaucoma – Damages your peripheral (side) vision

- Once vision loss is noticeable, it is often too late to reverse the damage.
- Regular comprehensive eye exams and diagnostic imaging are essential for early detection.



Diabetic retinopathy – Affects the central vision of those with diabetes

- Most people with diabetes will develop diabetic retinopathy.
- With rising rates of diabetes at younger ages, working-age Canadians are increasingly impacted.



Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) – Affects central vision

- Can make reading, recognizing faces, watching TV, using electronic devices, and night driving very difficult.
- Early AMD often has no symptoms and affects up to 20% of adults over the age of 60.

More than 2.5 million Canadians live with with macular degeneration, close to 1 million with diabetic retinopathy, and about 750,000 with glaucoma. Many are still working age.

Early diagnosis through regular comprehensive eye exams and early treatment of eye diseases is the best way to protect your sight.

Comprehensive Eye Exams: More Than Just Glasses

Vision care is not just about frames, lenses, and contact lenses. A comprehensive eye examination with an optometrist is recommended every 24 months. At your exam the optometrist:

- ✓ Checks your vision and updates your prescription if needed.
- ✓ Assesses the health of your eyes.
- ✓ Screens for eye diseases like glaucoma, AMD, and diabetic retinopathy.
- ✓ Screens for signs of other health system issues, such as high blood pressure, heart disease, multiple sclerosis, tumors, and autoimmune or inflammatory conditions.

“Diagnostic Imaging” and Why You Should Care

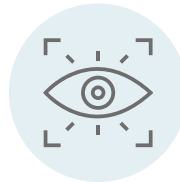
Most modern comprehensive eye exams now include diagnostic imaging. This is no longer a “nice to have” — it’s an essential part of early detection and effective treatment.

Two of the most common tools are **Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT)**, which creates a detailed 3D image of the layers of your retina and **Widefield Retinal Imaging**, which captures a detailed image of the back of your eye. Optometrists may also use other specialized imaging if they suspect an eye or systemic (whole-body) condition.

Before Your Next Visit:



Check your comprehensive eye exam coverage/allowance



Ask if you will be receiving an OCT or retinal imaging



Book a full comprehensive eye exam



Mention if you have diabetes or any other health condition

Taking the time for a comprehensive exam every 24 months, even if you don’t wear prescription glasses or contacts, is a simple step that can protect your eyesight, and support your overall health.

Want to learn more? Visit the CAO’s **Don’t Lose Sight website** to find out more about comprehensive eye exams, diagnostic imaging, and common eye diseases: dontlosesight.ca