



# Vision

Many changes in vision are gradual and may go unnoticed. These changes begin at around 40 years of age and can make it difficult to judge distances, see the edges of stairs and objects on the ground or adjust to changes in light. It is important to have your eyes checked by an optometrist every two years.

**Have your vision checked every two years.**

Some eye conditions can affect your vision and make it difficult to see. These pictures show how some eye conditions can affect your vision.

Normal



Cataracts



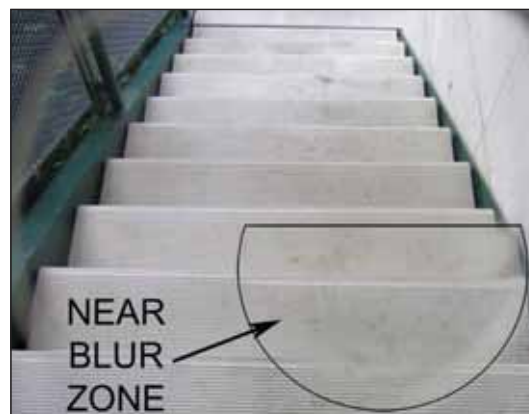
Glaucoma



Age-related maculopathy



Stairs viewed through bifocals



## Do you maintain your eyes and glasses?

Q I have not had my eyes examined in the last two years Yes  No

A If you answered 'Yes'

Ideally, it is best to have your eyes checked by an optometrist every two years or more regularly if recommended by your eye care practitioner. Medicare covers this.

Q I have not checked my eyeglasses prescription in the last two years Yes  No

A If you answered 'Yes'

Your optometrist can check if the prescription for your glasses is still correct and that they still fit properly. If you get new glasses or a stronger prescription, it may take time for you to get used to them. Make sure you take extra care while they are new.

## Do you have trouble seeing as you walk around?

Q My eyes take a long time to adjust to different light levels Yes  No

A If you answered 'Yes'

As you walk around, your eyes take time to adjust to different levels of light. Sudden changes in light levels may make it hard to see clearly or make you unsteady. To reduce this, you can wear a hat and sunglasses when outside to reduce glare and make it easier to see. When moving to or from bright to dim areas, you can stop, hold onto something and wait for your eyes to adjust.

Q I have trouble seeing the edges of the stairs clearly in my home Yes  No

A If you answered 'Yes'

Contrast strips applied to the edges of stairs can help you to better judge the height and depth of stairs. These strips can be purchased from a hardware store and applied to stair edges. You should also have your eyes checked by an optometrist every two years or more regularly if recommended by your eye care practitioner.

**Q** I wear bifocal or multifocal glasses when walking around

Yes  No

**A** **If you answered 'Yes'**

If you wear bifocals or multifocals while walking, your perception of depth can be distorted, particularly when walking up or down stairs. Talk to your optometrist about whether you need a separate pair of distance vision glasses for walking around.

### Tips to help with vision

- › Check your glasses regularly to make sure the lenses are clean and not scratched.
- › Keep your eyes and glasses in good working order by having them both checked regularly by an optometrist.
- › Ensure your stair and shelf edges are obvious by applying contrast strips to the edges.
- › If you need cataract surgery, talk with your doctor or specialist about how soon you can have them removed. There are often waiting lists for this type of surgery so talk to your doctor as soon as possible.

### Who can help?

- › Optometrist
- › Orthoptist
- › Ophthalmologist

Further information on the health professionals listed above is available on page 38.

**I plan to take action by ...**

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