

Why are your eyes changing as you get older?

The ability to see 20/20 does not mean perfect vision. Many adults can actually read 20/20 and still wear glasses some of the time for distance or near tasks. Children can need glasses at any age.

Slight prescriptions for nearsightedness, farsightedness or astigmatism can cause a slight blur at distance or near. This can show up as tired eyes, fatigue when reading or squinting under low lighting conditions. Most children do not complain of vision problems because they think it is normal or they are afraid to go and see the eye doctor. Also these changes can be so gradual that they really don't notice their vision changing and getting worse. School screenings tend to miss these kids.

Many adults tell me that they started wearing glasses at about the age of 10 or 12; however they often think that they needed glasses before then. We don't like to wait until vision gets bad to correct vision with glasses. If we wait to correct your child's vision, this only means that they have been struggling in school before we restore their vision to 20/20. Wearing glasses doesn't make your child's eyes worse or make their vision change faster than if they didn't wear glasses.

If one or both parents wear glasses, in most cases, their children will also need glasses sometime in their lives. Nearsightedness, farsightedness and astigmatism run in families. If your prescription is higher and you use glasses most or all of the time you want to think that your children will also need glasses.

Nearsightedness, farsightedness and astigmatism are genetically inherited traits. It is the same as how tall your children will grow. Most children are not significantly taller or shorter than either parent. There is nothing that you can do to make your kids grow taller. Their genes have already determined how tall or short they will become. Vision works the same way. If the genes for poor vision are there, their vision tends to go bad no matter what you do. All we can do as parents is make sure that we test and detect the changes in vision as soon as they happen, correct the vision when necessary and then continue to monitor their eyes for further changes.

Contact lenses can be a good correction options for teenagers. The average age for a first time contact lens wearer is about 12 years of age. When you begin contact lenses you will need to care for the contacts, clean the lenses and change the contacts on a regular schedule. If you do not properly care for and clean the contact lenses you may develop eye infections or allergies to the contact lenses themselves. It is important to remember that contact lenses are medical devices that require ongoing care. Before you are fit into contact lenses we require patient to also have a good pair of eyeglasses for use in the evening and weekends. Two week high oxygen disposable soft contact lenses are the most common lenses we prescribe. Over wearing of contact lenses can also lead to eye infection or allergies in the eyes.

We recommend that you select a good durable frame. Get involved in whether you like the frame shape and color. We strongly recommend impact-resistant lenses for safety during play and sporting activities. We recommend transition lenses that are clear indoors and that change to a tinted lens outdoors for better visual comfort and 100% ultraviolet protection. We recommend antireflective coating on lenses to increase the amount of light getting through the lenses to your child's eyes. When a light ray passes through a lens some of the light is lost due to reflections. This loss of light reduces our ability to see as clearly as possible. These features help your child to be proud of their new glasses.

If you lose or break your glasses, and glasses are worn on a full time basis, you need to replace them now, don't wait until next year or even next month. Glasses are a functional item. Think of it like the tires on your car or food for your body. Without glasses you could still function, however you would be severely handicapped in your day to day activities. Glasses that are used every day are more important than clothing, shoes, CD's, video games, going to the movies, or eating out at the mall. Most parents buy their children new clothing every year before school starts. However you should think of clothing as a part time use item, we don't wear the same shirt, pants or shoes inside the house and outside the house, during the day and at night, Monday through Sunday. We change and rotate our clothing so that it stays fresh and so that we look modern and up to date. We need to place the same value on glasses since they are a functional part of your child's everyday wardrobe. If your child loses their glasses you need to get a replacement pair. The best way to avoid this problem is to have a second back up pair of glasses with their current prescription.

LASIK is a correction option when you reach your middle 20's. The upper correction range for LASIK is currently about -10.00 to +5.00. You will still need reading glasses, whether you do LASIK or not, in your early 40's. LASIK is a permanent correction of your distance prescription