



## Evans and McMahon: One-Stop Eyecare

Canberra City: 6257-1103 Tuggeranong: 6293-1171

### Eyecare PLUS

Evans and McMahon Optometrists are members of the EyecarePLUS network.

EyecarePLUS is a selected group of independently owned practices across Australia. To be accredited, these practices have met stringent membership criteria to ensure that they provide professional eyecare plus quality optometric goods and excellence in service.

EyecarePLUS practices must be up to date with the latest techniques and instrumentation for vision examinations and offer all treatment options. They must also provide a wide range of quality optical frames to suit all budgets and provide a warranty on all spectacle frames.

EyecarePLUS practices are also inspected on a regular basis to ensure that they maintain the highest standards of quality optometric care and service.

As members, EyecarePLUS practices share resources for staff education, as well as exclusive ranges of good value frames and high technology lenses. We are confident that this will then further improve the services that we provide.

Together with the other optometrists in EyecarePLUS practices across Australia, we will be able to offer the advantages of being part of a large optometric group, yet remain independent and able to provide the personalised optometric service that our patients have come to expect.

### Juliet is Retiring

Well - I've gone and done it! I have decided to retire from Optometry practice after 31 years, effective from 1 July.

I have been very fortunate to meet so many lovely people as patients over the years, and will greatly miss this relationship, however I am happy in knowing that you will be looked after well by my colleagues at the practice. Thank you all for the opportunity to care for your vision needs, and to get to know you a little at the same time.

Best wishes & see you around - Juliet

*Editor's Note: We wish Juliet every happiness and hope she can finally do those things that have been pushed to the "do-later" pile.*

### Cosmetics and Eye Bugs

Make-up can enhance appearance but products such as mascara can become a breeding ground for germs and bacteria that can cause eye infections. Old mascara and other eye make-up can be unsafe for our eyes because, just like food, some cosmetics have a use-by date and can become dangerous to use.

The more moisture a product contains, the more it is able to harbour bacteria so it is best to discard mascara and liquid eye-liner after three months. Powders can be kept longer, eye shadow for 12 months and eye pencil for up to two years.

Avoid applying mascara while moving, especially in a car. Scratching the eye with a mascara wand is a common injury that can lead to an eye infection.

It is important not to share eye make-up because tear ducts carry viruses that can cause colds and 'flu. Make-up applied on the inside edge of your eyelid can block the tiny glands, which in turn can cause sties and dry eyes.

Wash and dry your hands thoroughly before applying your make-up to minimise the transfer of harmful bacteria from your fingers to your eyes.

Insert contact lenses prior to applying your make-up. Keeping your contact lenses clean is vital to avoid infection. It also makes it easier to see the make-up you are applying and prevents make-up getting underneath your lenses.

Take your make-up off before going to bed at night. Eye makeup can make its way into your eyes while you are sleeping.

Although our defence system naturally fights bacteria, it is wise to discard old make-up regularly to avoid bacteria accumulating and risking eye infection.

### New Treatment for AMD?

In a world first, researchers at the Centre for Eye Research Australia (CERA) will trial a new laser therapy aimed at stopping the progression of the sight threatening disease, age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

Head of Macular Research at CERA, Professor Robyn Guymer said the trial is particularly exciting because unlike existing AMD treatments, the laser therapy targets the disease in the early stages, before sight is lost.

"Currently when a patient is diagnosed with early AMD, they're told that nothing can be done until the disease reaches its late stages, by which time some patients have suffered irreversible vision loss" Professor Guymer said.

"In applying the laser therapy we hope to halt, or partially reverse, the progression of AMD before it threatens a patient's sight".

Professor Guymer said the treatment involves a specially designed novel laser device that delivers a controlled nanosecond dose of laser energy to the eye.

"Preliminary research suggests that the application of retinal regeneration laser therapy to the affected eye can eliminate the yellow deposits, known as 'drusen', which are present in the retinal tissue of people with AMD" she said.

"In eliminating the drusen from a patient's retina, we hope to reverse the degenerative processes caused by the disease".

"If successful, the laser therapy will be a major breakthrough in AMD treatment and will potentially benefit millions of people world-wide".

AMD is a progressive disease affecting the central area of the retina called the macula. Fifteen per cent of people over 50, or half a million Australians, live with the early stages of the disease. It is the leading cause of vision loss in Australia and is estimated to cost the community more than 2.6 billion dollars annually.

The Study, to be conducted at the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital, will involve 50 patients with early AMD.

## Eye Safety

Eye injuries can occur while carrying out everyday tasks such as mowing a lawn or gardening but a high percentage of injuries occur in the workplace and are commonly caused by flying particles from grinding or welding.

Workers who wear standard spectacles are often lulled into a false sense of security, thinking their eyes are sufficiently protected.

Prescription spectacles are designed to correct vision; they are not safety glasses.

Taking simple precautions and making sure you have appropriate eye protection for the type of work you are doing is the best way of reducing risk.

Safety glasses may look like regular spectacles but the lenses are tougher and provide better protection against flying debris. If you have a vision problem, you can use specially made safety spectacles that have corrective lenses.

Safety goggles fit snugly around your eyes and may offer an extra level of protection above that provided by safety glasses.

Eye shields cover your upper face and have much the same function as goggles but are less likely to fog. Face shields cover your entire face. You can wear corrective spectacles or contact lenses beneath these shields.

Helmets or goggles with special filters are available, which provide greater protection for welders or those who work with lasers.

Be aware of people around you when carrying out potentially harmful tasks. All hazards can affect those walking past or helping you perform a task who are not wearing appropriate eye protection.

If you think you could be at risk of a work-related eye injury, you can seek advice from your optometrist.

## Seniors' Spectacle Subsidy

If you have a Seniors' Card, the ACT Government will pay \$35 towards the cost of spectacles. Please ask one of our staff how we can assist you in reducing your cost when providing you with new spectacles.

## Long Arm of the Eyes

Around the age of 40 years most people start to experience presbyopia, which is a gradual loss of ability to focus at normal reading distance. This is part of the natural ageing process. Presbyopia cannot be prevented but it can be corrected by using prescription lenses.

Presbyopia occurs due to a change in the shape and flexibility of the lens in our eye. Normally, the lens changes shape to focus light directly on the retina but with age, the lens stiffens and cannot change shape easily. Close objects such as newsprint, mobile phones or needles and thread can look blurry. Other symptoms include poor concentration, eye strain, headaches and tiredness from reading or other close work.

Although presbyopia is a normal condition, there are many other conditions that can cause vision loss. You may not know when you have a serious eye problem and after the age of 40 years the risk of developing cataracts and eye diseases such as macular degeneration and glaucoma is much greater. The earlier a problem is detected, the greater is your chance of retaining good vision.

## Emergencies

Emergency appointments are available every day for patients with urgent problems.

If your eyes are suddenly red or sore, especially if only one eye is affected, or should you have any sudden reduction of vision, please contact us immediately.