



Evans and McMahon: One-Stop Eyecare

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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.

Diabetes and the Eye

July 12-18 is National Diabetes Week. About seven per cent of the Australian population over 25 years of age have diabetes, increasing to about 24 per cent of people over 75 years of age. Of these, more than 70 per cent will develop some changes in their eyes within 15 years of diagnosis. Optometrists play a fundamental role in diagnosing these conditions in their early stages when they respond best to treatment.

Diabetes sometimes causes the focusing ability of the eye to weaken or to fluctuate from day to day. This characteristic has often led to optometrists diagnosing diabetes in their patients. The problem eases

when blood glucose levels are well controlled. Diabetes can also cause more dangerous changes in the eyes, primarily through its effects on the blood vessels in the retina.

After diabetes has been present for some years, changes may occur at the back of the eye in the retina. Your optometrist can detect these changes, known as diabetic retinopathy. The risk of developing retinopathy increases with the length of time you have had diabetes. The risk is also increased when blood glucose levels are not well controlled over time.

The best management is to have regular eye examinations so that changes can be detected and treated early. It is advisable for all people with diabetes to have yearly eye examinations. People who have been diagnosed as having retinopathy should have eye examinations more frequently than once a year.

Lenses to Slow Myopia

This ground breaking discovery was based on research conducted by Vision CRC partners - the University of Houston College of Optometry and the Brien Holden Vision Institute, located at the University of New South Wales.

Myopia affects over 1.6 billion people globally, with two thirds of those affected living in the Asia region. If unchecked, the number is expected to reach 2.5 billion by 2020. There are 3.5 million people affected in Australia.

With myopia, instead of a distant image being focused on the retina, as it needs to be for clear vision, it is focused in front of the retina. Professor Brien Holden, CEO of the Vision CRC, said "Myopia can be a serious eye condition. High myopia significantly increases the risk of cataract, glaucoma, and retinal detachment, and the public health risk is significant."

Successful basic research on the nature and cause of myopia has led to the discovery that the peripheral retinal image plays a major part in stimulating eye growth and myopia. Large scale clinical trials testing both spectacles and contact lenses designed to control the position of the peripheral image and involving over 500 children in China and Australia, have produced promising results.

So far, the trials have found that the first spectacle lens prototypes based on this new technology slow the rate of progress of myopia by 30% in children six to 12 years of age, where the child has a history of parental myopia.

Professor Smith, from the University of Houston, commented "This new technology is not just for children either. Over 25% of myopes in the Western world are adult-onset myopes, which often begins at University. We believe that this technology has potential benefits for all myopes."

At Evans and McMahon we find this exciting news, and eagerly await for when the technology is made commercially available.

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.

Dry Eyes In Winter

Coming into another cold, dry and windy Canberra winter, we have to watch out for dry eyes. Dry eye syndrome occurs when there isn't enough fluid on the front of the eyes, or tears evaporate too quickly. There are many different causes of dry eyes, including environmental change.

Symptoms may include:

- stinging or burning
- occasional blurred vision
- redness
- tired eyes
- mucus around the eyelids, particularly upon waking
- a feeling of grittiness, or the sensation of something foreign in the eye

Symptoms can be managed by lubricating eye drops, gels, and dietary supplements, so if you have any concerns please see your optometrist.

Vision and Sports

Think of your favourite sport; chances are your vision plays an important part in that activity. Coordination, concentration, balance and accuracy are just a few of the visually-related abilities you use during a sports event. When you train for your sports activities, you probably work on your aerobic capacity, endurance, strength, muscle tone and/or flexibility. The stamina, flexibility and fine-tuning of your visual system can sometimes provide you with the split-second timing you need to truly excel at your chosen sport.

A sports vision optometrist looks at how vision is required in specific sports. Then assessment is undertaken to see if vision correction is required for the sport and what is the best method of supplying that vision correction, as well as whether eye protection is needed for that sport. Further evaluation determines

how the two eyes work together to see if they are working as efficiently as possible for the level of sport being played.

Many of these aspects are covered during a standard consultation, but some of the skills require tests which are outside the normal and require more sports specific equipment.

Choosing Frames

While fashion considerations probably are the largest factor in most people's choice of a frame, there are a number of practical matters that should be considered.

The frame must be appropriate for your prescription and the type of lenses they are going to hold. If you are getting bifocals or progressive lenses, the dimensions of the frames must accommodate both the distance and near portions of the lenses. If you have a high power prescription, you should choose a frame with smaller lenses, as larger lenses will be thicker and heavier.

The most important factor to consider is the fit of the frame. It doesn't matter how good a frame looks if you always have to push it back up your nose. Different types of frames fit different shaped noses, and it is always a good idea to get professional advice if you have difficulty finding a frame that fits.

Our staff at Evans and McMahon are fully qualified to ensure the correct blending of your optical prescription with spectacle frame, and will be more than happy to help you choose a frame that best suits you.

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.