



Valley Eye Care

Vision Source!®

Dr. Eric Knutson, Dr. Rob Young, Dr. Jim Hale

Summer 2006



**WE REALLY LOVE
kids!**

At our office, we believe that children should receive eye care beginning at a young age. We know that they need quality vision and eye-health examinations to diagnose any vision problems or eye conditions early on. There are two important reasons for this:

1 Vision problems that are caught early can often be treated successfully. Amblyopia, or lazy eye, is just one condition that usually responds well to early treatment.

2 Good eyesight is essential to proper learning and development. Long before a child goes to school, he or she is learning from his or her family and environment. Good vision is necessary for this, so discovering a vision problem that can be corrected with glasses or contacts can aid in learning.

Our staff is specially trained to meet the eye-health and vision needs of little ones. Vision problems such as nearsightedness are not uncommon in children. Diagnosing a problem early can give your child his or her best chance at learning.

When we look in your eyes...

Many people know that illnesses such as diabetes may first manifest themselves in the eyes. However, recent research is pointing to the possibility of diagnosing other diseases and problems, such as high cholesterol, through eye exams. These findings make the need for regular eye examinations more important than ever.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS)

This disease attacks the central nervous system, causing problems with muscle control, sense of touch, and balance, among others. It can wreak havoc with quality of life and even kill. Optic neuritis occurs when the optic nerve, located at the back of the eye, becomes inflamed. More than half of those who have MS will have optic neuritis, so this problem is an indication that testing for MS should be done. Symptoms of optic neuritis include pain, graying or blurred vision, and even blindness in the affected eye.

We've always known that regular vision and eye-health exams, coupled with quickly reporting eye problems to our office, can help protect your vision. Now, we also believe that it can help you protect your overall health in a number of ways.

Don't neglect to have these examinations done according to the schedule we've recommended for you.

HIGH CHOLESTEROL

The presence of excess cholesterol in the bloodstream can mean increased risk of stroke or heart attack. Early identification of patients who have high cholesterol can mean taking steps to lower it and preventing more serious problems. Eye conditions that may be signs of cholesterol problems include arcus senilis and Hollenhorst plaque. Arcus senilis is a white line that appears around the cornea of the eye due to cholesterol deposits. Hollenhorst plaque is cholesterol that has detached itself from somewhere in the body and has come to rest in the retina.

HYPERTENSION

Hypertension, or high blood pressure, may first manifest itself when the blood vessels of the retina begin to shrink. A study has noted that people who have narrowed blood vessels in this area have double the chance of developing hypertension as those who have normal-sized vessels. High blood pressure is known as a "silent killer" because symptoms often are not apparent.

Thank you for all your referrals. We appreciate them!

KIDS, COMPUTERS, and VISION



Children aren't immune to the eye problems that adults experience from too much computer use. The symptoms of headaches, fatigue, and blurred vision can affect children in ways similar to adults; however, there may be extenuating circumstances when children are involved. With millions of kids using

computers in and out of school on a daily basis, an examination of how that can affect them is worth undertaking.

Because children tend to continue in an enjoyable activity for a great deal of time without taking breaks, they risk more discomfort to their eyes later on. Eye irritation can occur when a child doesn't blink adequately and tear production is compromised. Inability to focus can occur when long periods of time are spent focusing on certain icons. An undiagnosed problem with farsightedness can cause strain as well as headaches.

There are a number of things that can be done to reduce the likelihood of computer eye problems in children. Among these are checking to be sure the height of the monitor and keyboard are adjusted to fit the child. Lighting should be adequate, but set up to avoid glare on the screen. The time spent at the computer should be carefully monitored, and regular breaks should be taken. Blinking should be encouraged to keep the eyes lubricated. However, before any of this occurs, a professional vision and eye-health exam should be performed. If there are problems, such as farsightedness, they can be corrected so as to make computer time productive and avoid straining young eyes.

Eyeglasses for dogs?

What will they think of next?

Does your dog need eye protection? Is the debris of the environment where you live hard on his eyes? Does the wind in his eyes affect his comfort when he has his head sticking out the passenger-side window on the highway? If this is the case, there is now eyewear designed just for him or her.

These new specs are called "Doggles," and they can give your dog the same UV protection your sunglasses give you. Since a dog's eyes do tend to be on the dry side, a specially made pair of glasses may be just the ticket to increased comfort.

Doggles lenses come in a variety of colors, and the frames—in stylish racing flames motif—come in sizes that most dogs can wear. Don't ask us to provide them for your pooch, though...check pet stores and dispensaries on the Internet to fill this need.









IT MAY NOT BE "PINK" EYE

Pinkeye is one of the villains of summer. Along with poison ivy, mosquito bites, and sunburn, it is one of those nasty afflictions that can mar a week or more of an otherwise enjoyable season. What child—or adult, for that matter—doesn't dread waking up with an eye that's swollen, red, and crusty?

Unfortunately, many people diagnose themselves with conjunctivitis (pinkeye). Then, they root around in the fridge for that old tube of antibacterial eye ointment from last summer and start self-medicating. Hold on! There are a number of reasons why that's a bad idea, but one of the most important is that it may not be a case of pinkeye at all.

Common eye ailments that can masquerade as pinkeye include:

-  high pressure in the eye
-  inflammation inside the eye
-  blepharitis
-  allergies
-  styes
-  mites or lice

Blepharitis causes symptoms such as irritation of the eye and swelling. It is bothersome but not contagious. Allergies can cause redness, itching, and watering. Mites and head lice can both affect eyes. All of these require professional diagnosis to be sure of the cause.

Call us for help!

When you wake up with symptoms that appear to be pinkeye, don't take chances. Treat the affected area with a warm compress, and call us right away for an appointment. Rather than self-medicating with ointment that may be out of date, contact us for a definitive diagnosis and treatment that goes to the root of the problem.



Assessing your glaucoma risk

Glaucoma is a disease that can slowly steal a patient's sight without him or her realizing it until it is too late. While further damage from the disease may be prevented, the sight that has been lost cannot be restored. This is why having regular vision and eye-health exams to detect glaucoma early is critical. It's also important to assess your risk of developing glaucoma.

Who is at the highest risk for glaucoma? The presence of any of the following criteria affect one's likelihood of developing the disease:

- Increased intraocular pressure
- Race and family history of the disease
- Refractive problems, such as being near- or farsighted
- High blood pressure
- Being older than 40
- High blood pressure or cardiovascular disease
- Thinning of the cornea
- Diabetes
- History of injury to the eye

We can help you learn more about the factors that increase your risk of glaucoma. Let us help you become aware of your risk so that you'll have the best chance of retaining your vision far into the future.

Regular vision and eye-health exams to detect glaucoma early are critically important because the sight that has been lost cannot be restored.

Keep Safety In Sight This 4th of July

The sights and sounds of a fireworks display are a traditional part of a 4th of July celebration.

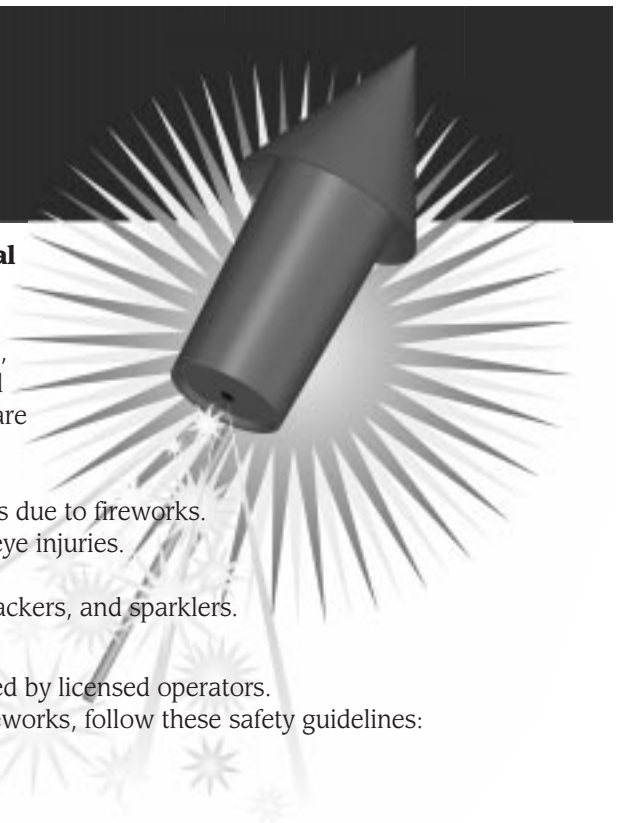
Unfortunately, fireworks also can lead to another annual tradition—a trip to the emergency room. According to the Centers for Disease Control, approximately 6,400 Americans are treated annually for fireworks-related injuries during the 4th of July holiday period. And of those, almost 1,300 are treated for injuries to the eye. Here are some more eye-opening statistics about fireworks and their danger to your vision:

- ★ Each year, as many as 400 Americans lose sight in one or both eyes due to fireworks.
- ★ Children under age 16 account for 60 percent of fireworks-related eye injuries.
- ★ Almost half of fireworks injuries happen to bystanders.
- ★ The fireworks that cause the most injuries are bottle rockets, firecrackers, and sparklers.

What can you do to celebrate safely?

- ★ Consider attending an authorized public fireworks display conducted by licensed operators.
- ★ If fireworks are legal where you live, and your family purchases fireworks, follow these safety guidelines:
 - Adults who ignite the fireworks should wear eye protection.
 - Never allow children to play with or ignite fireworks.
 - Read and follow all warnings and instructions.
 - Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
 - Only light fireworks on a smooth, flat surface away from the house, dry leaves, and flammable materials.
 - Never try to relight fireworks that have not fully functioned.
 - Keep a bucket of water in case of a malfunction or fire.

**Ask our office about safety glasses that can protect your eyes from injury year-round.
Visit us before the 4th of July for your free set of safety glasses.**





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*Here's your Valley Eye Care
Vision Source newsletter!*

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Office Hours

Monday 8:30 a.m.-7:00 p.m.
Tuesday 8:30 a.m.-7:00 p.m.
Wednesday 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Thursday 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Friday 10:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Saturday 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

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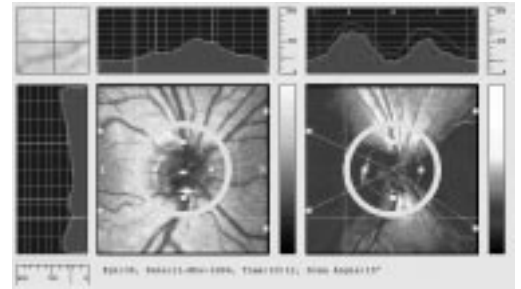
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Saving sight with **NERVE FIBER ANALYSIS**



Glaucoma is called the "thief of sight" because it tends to destroy sight so gradually that the sufferer may not even realize it. Peripheral vision usually is affected first, but eventually, as nerve fibers are destroyed, central vision can be lost as well. The earlier glaucoma is detected, the more sight can be saved.

"Nerve fiber layer analysis has helped me protect the vision of many patients through earlier diagnosis of glaucoma," says Dr. Jim Hale of Valley Eye Care. "Patients tell me that it brings peace of mind, knowing that state-of-the-art precision technology was used to arrive at an accurate diagnosis."

Nerve fiber analysis is an exciting new technology that can be used to help prevent loss of sight caused by glaucoma. The test utilizes the GDx scanner to measure the thickness of the layer of retinal nerve fibers located at the back of the eye. The GDx doesn't require that the eyes be dilated. Rather, it uses a laser, which can perform the measurement in only a few minutes. A computer program enables us to compare your test results to those of a normal eye to monitor changes and make recommendations. Done in conjunction with visual field testing, this procedure allows us to gain more information about the presence or progression of glaucoma.

Because of this remarkable technology, we can begin with a baseline test result that can be used to carefully monitor changes in the nerve fiber layer throughout a patient's life. Coupled with other forms of testing, this comfortable and easy test can be used to watch for signs of trouble. If a problem is detected, treatment can be chosen based on the patient's individual needs.

Next available date—July 2006

*Don't forget
to make
an eye-care
appointment
before summer*

FLIES BY!

The information included in this newsletter is not intended as a substitute for personal professional advice. For your specific situation, be sure to consult our office.