



Vision

What you should know

## Did you know that the sun's light can damage your eyes?



### It's just as important to protect your eyes from the sun's light as it is to shield your skin.

The strong ultraviolet (UV) light of the sun can damage cells in your eyes. UV light is made up of invisible light from the sun. UV light can cause cataracts, (a cloudy lens in the eye), and macular degeneration (a loss of central vision) later in life. Strong short-term UV light can cause an "eye sunburn." Eyes that are very painful after long hours on the beach, lake or ski slope could be after-effects of the sun's strength. Eyes can also be light sensitive while they heal.

#### Quick fact:

UV light can cause macular degeneration (the loss of central vision), a leading cause of vision loss for older Americans. Long-term exposure to UV light can also lead to skin cancer around the eyes.

## Protecting your eyes.

Sunglasses can be a fashion statement! They also are an important and easy way to keep your eyes healthy. To protect your eyes, your sunglasses should block out 99% to 100% of both UVA and UVB light.

Tinted lenses or sunglasses filter out excessive light, while photochromic lenses automatically darken when exposed to UV light. Photochromic lenses give you 100% UV protection. Polarized sunglasses improve what you can see and reduce glare by filtering out light coming from horizontal surfaces such as reflections off water and snow. They also block out 100% of UVA and UVB light.

Not all over-the-counter sunglasses block 100% of UV light, no matter how dark the tint. Poor-quality sunglasses may absorb only 40% of UV light. And remember, if you wear contact lenses, protect your eyes with good-quality sunglasses.

## Visit your eye doctor.

The damage that UV light can cause to the eyes should be taken seriously. A comprehensive eye exam can help correct your eyesight and identify issues that could lead to future problems. Your eye doctor can recommend the type of lens that is best for you.

### Quick fact:

The World Health Organization estimates that our eyes get the majority of their lifetime exposure to the sun's UV light by age 18<sup>1</sup>. Help your children by protecting their eyes from UV light to prevent future vision problems.

Your eye doctor can help you deal with UV light. Ask your eye doctor about the right sunglasses for your needs during your appointment.

Get an annual eye exam to see your way to better overall health!



Sources: [www.aoa.org](http://www.aoa.org); [www.preventblindness.org](http://www.preventblindness.org)

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.who.int/uv/publications/en/UVIGuide.pdf>

UnitedHealthcare vision coverage provided by or through UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company, located in Hartford, Connecticut, UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company of New York, located in Islandia, New York, or their affiliates. Administrative services provided by Spectera, Inc., United HealthCare Services, Inc. or their affiliates. Plans sold in Texas use policy form number VPOL.06.TX or VPOL.13.TX and associated COC form number VCOC.INT.06.TX or VCOC.CER.13.TX. Plans sold in Virginia use policy form number VPOL.06.VA or VPOL.13.VA and associated COC form number VCOC.INT.06.VA or VCOC.CER.13.VA.