

# August is National Cataract Awareness Month

8/15/2011

Almost everyone who lives a long life will develop cataracts at some point. As more Americans live into their 70s and beyond, we all need to know a few cataract basics: risks and symptoms, tips that may delay onset and how to decide when it is time for surgery so good vision can be restored. Vision Care 4Life encourages Americans to know their risks, especially people who have diabetes, smoke or have a family history of cataracts.

Get a routine eye exam every year. During this visit, your eye doctor will advise you on how often to have follow-up exams. People of any age with symptoms or risks for eye disease, such as a family history, should see their eye doctor to determine a care and follow-up plan.

Know your risk factors. In addition to having a family history of cataract, having diabetes or being a smoker, other factors can increase your risk of developing a cataract. These include extensive exposure to sunlight, serious eye injury or inflammation and prolonged use of steroids, especially combined use of oral and inhaled steroids.

Reduce your risks. Use UV-rated sunglasses when outdoors and add a wide-brimmed hat when spending long hours in the midday sun. One of the best things anyone can do for their eyes and overall health is to quit smoking or never start. People with diabetes can reduce cataract risk by carefully controlling their blood sugar through diet, exercise and medications if needed.

If you have any other questions, please don't hesitate to call us at 316-682-9891 or visit our website, [www.visioncare4life.com](http://www.visioncare4life.com) and check out our "Education Pages."