May Is Vision Health Month in Canada



Each year, May is Vision Health Month in Canada (and in the US). Vision Health Month is a national awareness campaign designed to educate Canadians about their vision health and eliminate avoidable sight loss

Why the focus on vision health' One in seven Canadians will develop a serious eye disease in their lifetime. But 75% of vision loss can be prevented or treated.

Workplace injury is a leading cause of eye trauma, vision loss, disability and blindness. So what can employers and workers do to protect workers' eyes and sight'

The NIOSH Science Blog recommends that employers do the following:

- Conduct an eye-hazard assessment of all workspaces and remove or reduce all eye hazards where possible.
- Optimize the lighting in the workplace for the tasks being performed.
- Provide appropriate personal protective eyewear for the types of hazards in the workplace, such as goggles, face shields, safety glasses or full-face respirators.
- Train workers on the proper use, fit and maintenance of protective equipment.
- Use caution flags to identify potential hazards, such as hanging or protruding objects.
- Provide emergency sterile eyewash solutions/stations and

post first aid instructions near hazardous areas.
- Offer workers the flexibility to switch job tasks and/or take breaks as needed to reduce eyestrain.
- Ask workers if they would benefit from modifications that would improve visibility of their tasks, such as magnifying glasses, increased lighting and bigger fonts on written materials.
- Offer comprehensive vision screenings onsite or provide workers with information on community resources that may offer such screenings.
- Consider providing shelter from the sun and/or sunglasses if workers must spend much time outdoors. Prolonged exposure to sunlight can increase risk for getting eye diseases and conditions, such as cataracts or age-related macular degeneration.
- Connect workers with resources to prevent or address chronic conditions that could impact their vision, such as diabetes.

And workers should:

- Get comprehensive dilated eye exams. Talk to your eye care professional about how often you should have one.
- Use protective eyewear, including safety glasses, goggles, safety shields, and eye guards. If you're not sure what eyewear to use at work, talk with your supervisor.
- Wear eyewear that fits comfortably on your face.
- Live a healthy lifestyle. Eating healthy foods, maintaining a healthy weight, managing chronic conditions and not smoking can lower your risk of eye disease.
- Learn more about your family history because many eye diseases are hereditary.
- Wear sunglasses outside to protect your eyes from the sun's ultraviolet rays. Look for sunglasses that block out 99-100% of both UVA and UVB radiation.