

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.