

Eye See ... Eye Learn

It's **never too early to have** your child's eyes examined by an optometrist.



DOCTORS OF OPTOMETRY

Eye See...Eye Learn is an early childhood program designed to ensure that eye health and/or vision problems are not factors in preventing children from performing to their full potential.

When should children start having their eyes examined?

Parents are encouraged to ensure children have their first eye examination at six months of age.

- This comprehensive assessment will focus on ensuring that your infant's eyes are healthy, and that there are no significant prescription or eye coordination problems.

If no problems are detected, your child should visit the optometrist again after age three.

- This appointment will focus on the detection and prevention of amblyopia, or lazy eye, the loss or lack of full development of vision in a healthy eye due to an eye coordination problem (strabismus) or a large difference in the prescription between the two eyes.
- It is estimated that 2 to 4% of all children have amblyopia, making it responsible for more pediatric vision loss than all ocular diseases or injuries combined.

Throughout your child's growing years and, **most importantly**, before they start school, eye exams should be yearly or as recommended by your optometrist.

- More than 80% of learning is dependent upon vision, yet as many as one in four children have a vision problem significant enough to impair their ability to learn.
- While approximately 10% of children start school with a vision problem, this percentage almost doubles by the time they reach high school, where the visual demands of studying increase significantly.

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Who can examine my child's eyes?

Optometrists, ophthalmologists, family doctors, and pediatricians all play a role in examining children's eyes. Optometrists and ophthalmologists, however, have special equipment and training to determine if your child's eyes are healthy and if they are seeing clearly.

Won't my child have a vision screening in school?

Vision screenings are definitely not a replacement for a comprehensive examination by an optometrist. An eye exam by your optometrist is designed to detect much more. After your child's exam, you should know the answers to these questions:

- Are my child's eyes healthy?
- Can my child see well at all distances?
- Does my child have good eye coordination?
- Does my child have normal depth perception?

My child's vision is 20/20. Isn't that perfect?

20/20 means your child has good distance vision. A comprehensive examination also assesses near vision, eye coordination, focusing skills, colour vision, and most importantly, eye health.

What if my child isn't complaining of any vision trouble?

Children rarely complain of vision problems often because they are not aware of them. With no comparison to 'normal', your child may assume that everyone sees the way they do. Children may be able to compensate for many significant eye problems, but don't get lulled into thinking that everything is okay.

And remember...

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Health covers the cost of annual eye examinations for all children under the age of eighteen.



**The Saskatchewan
Association of Optometrists**
108-2366 Avenue C North
Saskatoon, SK S7L 5X5

Toll Free: 877-660-3937
T 306-652-2069
F 306-652-2642
www.optometrists.sk.ca