

An essential part of eye care is eating the right foods that contain vitamins and nutrients to help keep the eyes healthy.



## Watching What You Eat Helps You See Better



Though the old adage says carrots are good for the eyes, that's only a small part of the story. An essential part of eye care is eating the right foods that contain vitamins and nutrients to help keep the eyes healthy.

**Antioxidants** - Antioxidants help prevent many diseases affecting the heart, immune system and eyes. Antioxidants include vitamins C, E and A. Fruits and vegetables are good sources of these antioxidants. When picking fruits and vegetables, notice the color and choose ones with darker skins to them.

**Vitamin A** – Found in foods made from animals, including liver and eggs, and in fruit and vegetables like carrots and spinach. Most types of milk are also fortified with vitamin A. Vitamin A is essential to proper functioning of the retina. It also helps prevent night blindness by aiding the eye to adapt between bright light and darkness.

**Vitamin C** – Found in orange juice but also in green peppers, strawberries, broccoli and sweet potatoes. Vitamin C does it all: strengthens bones and muscles, keeps the immune system in good shape, keeps our teeth and gums healthy, reduces the risk of many diseases – and it is no surprise that it is essential to keeping the eyes healthy.

**Vitamin E** – Found in nuts, green leafy vegetables and fortified products such as cereal. Consuming vitamin E helps prevent or reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease, coronary heart disease and different types of cancer. For eye care, vitamin E has been associated with the prevention of cataracts.

**Minerals** – Selenium and zinc help the body absorb antioxidants. Reaching daily values of these minerals can help antioxidants do their part in the prevention of eye diseases. Zinc can be found in cheese, yogurt, red meat, pork and certain fortified cereals. Selenium can be found in walnuts, enriched breads and rice, macaroni and cheese.

**Omega-3 fatty acids** are essential for eye and cardiovascular health by helping prevent hardening of arteries by reducing inflammation. Omega-3s can also lower the risk of dry eye syndrome, especially in women. Omega 3s are found in fish like salmon, herring and tuna and also in flaxseed oil.

These antioxidants and minerals can help keep eyes healthy. Visit the Sight and Hearing Association at [www.sightandhearingassociation.org](http://www.sightandhearingassociation.org) for more information

**Eye care...it's important!**

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