



February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013

## Help Your Eyes Last a Life Time

### Our eyes can change with age

Eyes are subject to the effects of aging as with the rest of the body. Some changes are nuisances (dry eye, thinning eyelashes) but others can be more serious. See your doctor if you experience any of these: double vision, crossed eyes, dark spots/veils in field of vision, loss of peripheral vision, clouding, pain, change in colour, redness, pain, light sensitivity or a crooked/squiggly appearance to straight lines.

Many people experience "floaters," little shadows that can drift through the visual field. They are typically clumps of cells or proteins floating in the fluid that fills the eyeball (vitreous) - they can even bump into the retina, stimulating a little "flash" in vision. Usually these are harmless and they become more common with age, but occasionally they can be an early sign of the potential for retinal detachment, so let your doctor know.

### Reduce your risk of cataracts

Researchers in the US are reviewing the results from the Physician's Health Study (PHS) II. Specifically, they are noting that, in an arm where over 11,000 subjects were followed for over 11 years, those subjects who took a daily multivitamin/mineral experienced a 9% reduction in the incidence of cataracts. Given the prevalence of cataracts, this information has the potential to impact a significant number of people.

### Know the signs of AMD

Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD) is a condition that attacks the retina of the eye at a point called the macula - the centre of your field of vision. It can lead to blurred or distorted vision or even a blind spot that can grow. There are two types: dry, which happens gradually, and wet, which can result in sudden loss of vision. Both can be caught with routine eye exams, in addition to cataracts and glaucoma, and they are all best treated early for success.

Your pharmacist is happy to answer your questions about any eye symptoms you experience and help you select self-treatment options or refer you to follow-up with your physician.