

Wellness Articles

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If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

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Sunglasses – more than just a fashion statement

Sunglasses are a “must have” for big-sky prairie summers and there is more to think about when selecting them than style and cost.

Sunglasses can protect your eyes from the harmful effects of ultraviolet (UV) light and can dramatically reduce the risk of damage to your eyes. In the same way your skin can be damaged by UV rays, your eyes can also be affected by the sun. Prolonged exposure can cause permanent eye damage and is a contributing factor in many eye disorders, like cataracts, macular degeneration and ophthalmic cancers.

The best UV protection is offered by close-fitting wraparound sunglasses, so glasses should fit closely to your face and wrap around the face.

It's important to read the label when selecting sunglasses, as different types of lenses protect your eyes from different types of light. Look for sunglasses or prescription lenses with full UVA and UVB protection – like those that are labelled as ‘UV400’ or ‘100% UV protection.’ Dark lenses don't necessarily block out more UV light than lighter lenses but it's still important to choose a pair that are dark enough to keep your eyes comfortable in bright sunlight. Keep in mind that contact lenses, even those with UV protection, don't provide full coverage for the eye and skin around the eye.

It's especially important to protect your eyes when the sun's rays are most intense – between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. In addition to wearing sunglasses, it's also a good idea to wear a wide-brimmed hat to protect skin and eyes.

Be sun-wise and take steps to protect your eyes.