



ASK THE OPTOMETRIST

ASK THE OPTOMETRIST IS A SERIES OF INFORMATION NEWSLETTERS THAT WE ARE PLEASED TO PROVIDE OUR PATIENTS AND ARE INTENDED TO ELABORATE ON A VARIETY OF RELEVANT EYECARE TOPICS.

PEDIATRIC EYECARE

Q1: WHY SHOULD MY CHILD HAVE AN EYE EXAMINATION?

UP TO 8 YEARS OF AGE, A CHILD'S VISUAL SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT IS INCOMPLETE. NORMAL VISUAL DEVELOPMENT DEPENDS ON GOOD VISUAL ACUITY IN EACH EYE AND PROPER EYE ALIGNMENT. POOR VISION OR MISALIGNMENT CAN RESULT IN PERMANENT LOSS OR WEAKNESS OF VISION. IT IS REPORTED THAT 80% OF LEARNING OCCURS THROUGH VISION.

Q2: WHEN SHOULD MY CHILD HAVE HIS FIRST EYE EXAM?

THE ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF OPTOMETRISTS RECOMMENDS THAT CHILDREN HAVE THEIR FIRST EYE EXAM AT 6 MONTHS OF AGE AND AGAIN AT AGE 3.

Q3: HOW ARE CHILDREN'S EYES TESTED?

EYE EXAMINATIONS IN CHILDREN INVOLVE MANY AGE-APPROPRIATE TESTS WHICH ARE DESIGNED TO BE FUN WHILE PROVIDING THE OPTOMETRIST VALUABLE INFORMATION. INFANTS ARE ASSESSED WITH A SERIES OF "OBJECTIVE" (NO VERBAL RESPONSES REQUIRED) TESTS UNLIKE THE "SUBJECTIVE" TESTING USED ON ADULTS. OCCASIONALLY, WHEN THE USE OF EYE DROPS IS REQUIRED, WE PROVIDE AN UNPRESERVED FORMULA FOR CHILDREN THAT MINIMIZES STINGING AND IS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH SIGNIFICANT SIDE EFFECTS.

Q4: WHAT IS A VISION SCREENING?

A VISION SCREENING IS A PASS/FAIL GROSS ASSESSMENT OF BASIC VISUAL SKILLS AND IS OFFERED AT MANY PRE-SCHOOL INSTITUTIONS. SCREENINGS ARE GENERALLY PERFORMED BY LAY VOLUNTEERS. ALTHOUGH THEY ARE USEFUL IN RAISING AWARENESS FOR CHILDREN'S VISION, THEY ARE NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR AN EYE EXAMINATION.

Q5: WILL CHILDREN WITH VISUAL PROBLEMS SHOW SIGNS?

MANY CHILDREN WITH VISUAL PROBLEMS SHOW SIGNS SUCH AS SQUINTING OR HEADACHES. HOWEVER, MOST OFTEN, A CHILD WITH A VISUAL PROBLEM DOESN'T SEEM TO HAVE ANY DIFFICULTIES VISUALLY AT ALL.