

stephen wilcox

OPTOMETRISTS

Seasons in the sun

For many people, 2022 will provide the first opportunity in three years to enjoy an Easter break abroad, or jet off on a summer holiday. Amid all the excitement of dusting down suitcases and anticipating sunshine, it's important to remember **our eyes won't be as happy to see the sun as we will.**

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**Your care is
our top priority**

When you visit us for an appointment, you can be sure we have done everything possible to protect you and to minimise the risk of infection

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The eyes have it

The human eye is so unique that retinal scans can identify someone as accurately as a fingerprint. As a result, there can be **significant vision differences between your left and right eye**, from colour vision deficiency to peripheral vision and short or longsightedness.

By using sophisticated equipment to examine each patient's eyes in detail, our expert optometrists often find unexpected variations. For instance, one eye might have astigmatism, meaning it's less spherical and more rugby ball-shaped. **This is a common reason why prescription strength varies between the two eyes**, but it might not be noticeable in normal daily life as the brain prioritises images from the dominant or stronger eye. This also happens if one eye develops a condition like glaucoma, underlining the value of regular eye tests.

Differences in vision may increase with age, as it becomes harder to view objects close up after 45. Varifocal lenses enable people to read close-up text and immediately refocus on more distant objects, or vice versa.

By taking precise measurements for each eye, **our expert team can ensure everyone has spectacles or contact lenses that offer optimal vision** at varying distances. That's something off-the-shelf reading glasses (which have the same prescription in both lenses) can't match.



Choosing glasses for children

Parents often assume their kids have excellent vision, but it's impossible to see the world through their eyes. Children might not realise their vision is imperfect because it's all they've ever known. Since academic and social development can be directly hindered by poor eyesight, **routine eye tests are vital to identify any areas of weakness**.

A General Optical Council-registered dispensing optician or an optometrist must oversee provision of children's spectacles. However, other members of our team can advise on non-prescription issues, such as picking suitable frames. Good choices will vary depending how active a child is, how strong their prescription needs to be and how important areas like peripheral vision are.

Ideally, you shouldn't impose your choice of glasses on children, especially as they get older and more self-conscious. **We stock a comprehensive array of frames for kids**, giving everyone a choice of comfortable glasses which complement their facial features. If they're clumsy, flexible frames and scratch-resistant lens coatings minimise the risk of damage, but a broken pair poses an immediate problem. We always recommend a backup pair of glasses...

Are your child's glasses tough enough?

For all those active children toughened lenses deliver optimal protection on the playing fields

Seasons in the sun

Sunglasses are central to effective eye protection. If existing sunglasses are old or scratched, schedule an eye test to ensure their prescription remains up to date. If you need a new pair, **we stock a comprehensive range to suit all ages, with various lens options available.** Never take cracked or damaged sunglasses away with you - if they fall apart mid-holiday, your eyes could be exposed to dangerous amounts of ultraviolet light. Also avoid cosmetic sunglasses, which may not offer the 100 per cent UV protection our lenses provide.

Effective eyecare also involves appropriate clothing. Wide-brimmed hats and baseball caps keep direct sunlight at bay, preventing heat stroke, sunburned scalps and eyestrain. Suncream should be lightly but regularly applied, avoiding direct contact with the eyes. Try to choose a water-repellent brand, so a quick dip won't wash it off.

Always test suncream before setting off, since **some brands contain ingredients and fragrances capable of causing eye irritation.** Immediately treat stinging or burning by flushing your eyes out with running water and applying cool damp cloths. Avoid eye rubbing, as this may increase irritation.

Finally, the above advice also applies to children as well as grown-ups. Youngsters may struggle to tell you that their head hurts or skin feels hot, so ensure they're appropriately protected at all times.

Pack snug-fitting sunglasses and wide hats, ensure suncream is regularly and liberally applied, and drink plenty of water.



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Top tips to take care of your contact lenses

Our most recent newsletter included a feature offering tips on how to comfortably wear contact lenses. This time, we're turning our attention to caring for these delicate yet complex objects...

- **Always wash your hands prior to handling your lenses.** Use non-moisturising soap and dry your hands on a lint free towel before touching lenses, to avoid transferring dirt or fluff onto them.
- **Follow cleaning routines thoroughly.** If you're given step-by-step instructions for tasks like air-drying contact lens cases, don't improvise or skip a stage!
- **Keep nails short.** Longer nails may tear delicate lenses, especially daily disposables, and could scratch your eyes during insertion/removal, particularly in the first few months of wear.
- **Practice rub-and-rinse.** By rubbing and rinsing reusable lenses after wear, this will reduce build up on the lens surface and improve disinfection whilst lenses are stored overnight.
- **Follow the same order.** Always remove and clean one lens first, to avoid confusion about which one has been removed, cleaned and disinfected.
- **Don't reuse contact lens solutions.** Always use fresh solution when soaking reusable lenses.
- **Use dedicated eye drops.** Never moisten lenses with tap water or saliva as this may increase the risk of infection.
- **Avoid exposure to water.** Showers, saunas, swimming pools and the sea could damage lenses or lead to infection. Wear snug fitting goggles when swimming.
- **Make sure to replace everything on schedule.** Never reuse daily disposables, and don't stretch the lifespan of reusable lenses, solutions or cases beyond any of the manufacturer recommendations.



Always seek expert advice

If you're uncertain, our staff are knowledgeable about every aspect of lens care and maintenance, and are always happy to help

To make an appointment, or for more information, please contact us at

**stephen
wilcox**
OPTOMETRISTS

169 Dunbabin Road
Liverpool L16 7QQ

Tel: 01517 221182
info@wilcox-optometry.co.uk
www.stephenwilcoxoptometrists.co.uk