

Experiencing Vision Problems?

Questions to Ask

www.VisionAware.org



Eye Exam



Eye Chart

Types of Eye Care Professionals: Your first step toward assessing your condition is to see an eye care professional about your eyes.

An Ophthalmologist is a medical (M.D.) or osteopathic (D.O.) doctor. Ophthalmologists specialize in eye and vision care, and are trained to provide the full spectrum of care. This includes prescribing glasses and contact lenses, as well as performing eye surgery. Ophthalmologists are medical school graduates and have a minimum of four years in further residency training in the medical and surgical management of eye disease. To ask a question or find a doctor, call the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) at 415-447-0213.

An Optometrist (O.D.) is a graduate of optometry school. Some optometrists complete an optional residency in a specific area of practice. They are trained to examine, diagnose, treat, and manage diseases, injuries, and disorders of the visual system, the eye, and associated structures, and to identify related systemic conditions affecting eyes. For more information and to find a doctor, call the American Optometric Association (AOA) at 1-800-365-2219.

Low Vision Specialist: Many optometrists and ophthalmologists have additional credentials or specialization in low vision testing, diagnosis, and treatment, and are trained to conduct low vision eye examinations and prescribe special low vision optical devices. If you're experiencing significant vision loss, a low vision specialist can determine what services and equipment can make the best use of your remaining vision.



Questions to Ask

Help with Vision Care

If you need financial assistance for eye care, here are some resources:

Eye Care America Call 1-866-324-EYES (3937), offered through the AAO.

VISION USA Call 1-800-766-4466, coordinated by the AOA.

Lions Clubs International Check the Lions Directory at <https://directory.lionsclubs.org/> and contact your local club.

Questions to Ask Before You Leave Your Eye Care Professional's Office

1. What is my diagnosis and what caused my eye condition?
2. Can my condition be treated? If so, what are the most effective options?
3. When should the treatment start and how long will it last?
4. What are the benefits and risks of this treatment and how successful is it? Are other treatments available if the first option fails?
5. Are there food/drugs/activities I should avoid related to my condition or treatment?
6. If I have to take medication, what should I do if I miss a dose or have a reaction?
7. Tell me about the kinds of tests involved in diagnosing or treating my condition and what you expect to find out from these tests. Do I have to do anything special to prepare for these tests and do they have risks or side effects? Will more tests be necessary later? Will my primary care doctor get the test results? When will I know the results?
8. What new symptoms should I watch for and what should I do?
9. How often should I see an eye specialist for follow-up?
10. If I continue to have problems with my vision that won't resolve — what then? Are there devices or services especially for people experiencing vision loss?

Find answers to this question and more, visit VisionAware™ at www.visionaware.org.

