



## Don't let your eye health become a game of red flags

*The Canadian Association of Optometrists releases a new "GetEyeWise" public campaign to raise awareness about eye health, and prompts all Canadians to take proactive steps to preserve their vision.*

**Ottawa, May 1, 2025** – During Vision Health Month, the Canadian Association of Optometrists (CAO) is committed to raising awareness about eye health and vision care. With an aging population, increased near-work, and a growing myopia epidemic, the integration of vision care into the healthcare routine for all age groups, from toddlers to seniors, is crucial. Several provincial associations of optometrists ([New Brunswick Association of Optometrists](#), [Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Optometrists](#), [Nova Scotia Association of Optometrists](#), and [The Prince Edward Island Association of Optometrists](#)) and sponsors from the industry - [Alcon](#) and [CooperVision](#) - support this campaign.

### Prevention is key

More than 8 million Canadians are currently living with eye disease including Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD), Diabetic Retinopathy (DR), cataracts, and glaucoma. Uncorrected refractive error and corneal disease (specifically dry eye) are also major contributors to vision loss. Several factors can impact vision such as family history, age, environmental causes, lifestyle choices, and prolonged use of digital devices.

The incidence of vision impairment is increasing with many cases stemming from conditions that are treatable. In Canada, it is estimated that 90%<sup>1</sup> of vision loss can be treated or prevented if detected early. Many people are not familiar with the role of optometrists, the importance of regular comprehensive eye exams, and often overlook them until they notice obvious symptoms. Because many serious eye conditions do not present obvious symptoms initially, waiting for red flags can expose individuals to significant risks.

### Eye Care is primary Health Care

"Optometrists are at the forefront of vision care, and as primary care health professionals, they support ensuring better health outcomes for all Canadians", says Dr. Martin Spiro, President of the Canadian Association of Optometrists. "They diagnose, treat, and help prevent diseases and disorders affecting the visual system (the eye and related structures). Comprehensive eye exams can also uncover underlying and life-threatening health issues, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, hypertension, some cancers, brain tumour, and neurological conditions".

The CAO recommends<sup>2</sup> comprehensive eye exams for children starting at six to nine months, then again between the ages of two and five years, and annually thereafter to age 19.

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<sup>1</sup> The Lancet Global Health Commission on Global Eye Health: vision beyond 2020  
Burton, Matthew J et al. The Lancet Global Health, Volume 9, Issue 4, e489 - e551

<sup>2</sup> CAO Position Statement on [Eye Exam Frequency](#)



After 19, eye development usually stabilizes, allowing check-ups every two years for healthy adults with no known eye or other health conditions. However, after age 65, yearly exams are recommended once again due to the increased risk of eye disease.

### **Eye health is not a game of red flags**

The new “GetEyeWise” campaign highlights the importance of prevention and proactive steps Canadians can take when it comes to eye health. By showcasing relatable, everyday scenarios, the campaign raises awareness about the crucial role of regular eye exams in detecting potential issues early. It underscores optometrists as essential primary eye care providers, helping Canadians achieve better overall health outcomes. It will run throughout May on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Pinterest and Spotify in both English and French.

To find more about the CAO’s new campaign, please visit: <https://opto.ca/avoid-the-red-flags>

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### **About the Canadian Association of Optometrists**

The Canadian Association of Optometrists (CAO) is the national voice of optometry. Optometrists are independent primary health care providers and represent the front line of vision health. Optometrists practice in a range of settings: most work in private practice, others work in clinics, hospitals, community health centres, corporate optometry, research, teaching, and administration. Recognized at home and internationally as a leading advocate for the profession, CAO is dedicated to providing leadership and support to its +8,400 members (Optometrists, Students, and Optometric Assistants) to enhance the delivery of healthy eyes and clear vision for all Canadians. For more information, visit [www.opto.ca](http://www.opto.ca)

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### **About Alcon**

Alcon helps people see brilliantly. As the global leader in eye care with a heritage spanning over 75 years, we offer the broadest portfolio of products to enhance sight and improve people’s lives. Our Surgical and Vision Care products touch the lives of more than 260 million people in over 140 countries each year living with conditions like cataracts, glaucoma, retinal diseases and refractive errors. Our more than 25,000 associates are enhancing the quality of life through innovative products, partnerships with Eye Care Professionals and programs that advance access to quality eye care. Learn more at <https://www.alcon.ca/en>.

### **About CooperVision**

CooperVision, a division of CooperCompanies (NYSE:COO), is one of the world’s leading manufacturers of contact lenses. The company produces a full array of daily disposable, two-week and monthly soft contact lenses that feature advanced materials and optics, and premium rigid gas permeable lenses for



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orthokeratology and scleral designs. CooperVision has a strong heritage of addressing the toughest vision challenges such as astigmatism, presbyopia, childhood myopia, and highly irregular corneas; and offers the most complete portfolio of spherical, toric and multifocal products available. Through a combination of innovative products and focused practitioner support, the company brings a refreshing perspective to the marketplace, creating real advantages for customers and wearers. For more information, visit <https://coopervision.ca>.