



MERCURY BAY OPTOMETRIST EYE TIMES

ISSUE 58

FACTORS THAT IMPACT VISION IN WINTER



Dry Air

As outdoor temperatures drop during the winter, the air becomes colder and can no longer hold as much atmospheric water vapour (humidity) as warmer air present during the rest of the year. Cold winter winds are especially dehydrating to our eyes and skin that are comprised mostly of water. When the air is dry, the eye surface, which is 99 percent water, loses moisture content to accelerated evaporation and can become dry, dehydrated and irritated.

Reflected UV Radiation

It's commonly known that excessive UV exposure from direct sunlight puts us at greater risk for skin cancer and can even lead to cataracts, hence the reason we're advised to wear sunglasses and sunscreen during long periods of outdoor activity. If you are enjoying winter sports, remember that UV radiation can also be reflected from the snow and while it may not always cause a sunburn, it poses just as great a threat to our vision health.

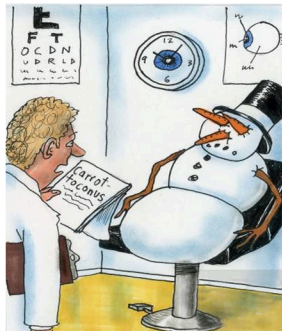
Indoor Air

Dry air isn't just problematic outside during the cooler months. When we heat our homes during the winter, the cold, dry air from outside is heated up and forced indoors. Warm dry air is even more dehydrating than cool dry air and creates an uncomfortable and dehydrating environment for our eyes and skin. Recirculated indoor air also contains other dehydrating factors such as ambient skin flora and bacteria, in far greater amounts than fresh outdoor air.

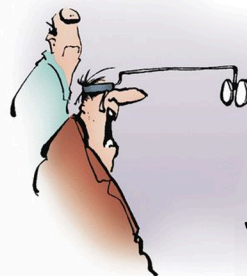
Maintaining Healthy Winter Vision Is Simple

Although the cold, dry air of winter may not be ideal for optimal vision health, there are plenty of solutions to keep your eyes clear, comfortable, and healthy, such as:

- Keep your eyes moist. Placing houseplants or a humidifier in your home can drastically improve dry indoor air conditions. Moisturizing eye drops can relieve dry eyes as well. Feel free to ask your Mercury Bay Optometrist which drops would be right for you.
- Wear sunglasses in the winter. Choose sunglasses with UV protection to ensure your vision is safe from snow-reflected sunshine.
- Consider wearing eyeglasses more frequently than contact lenses. Regular eyeglasses do a better job of protecting your eyes from the cold winter winds and can even help hold heat and moisture close to the eyes.



"Yes, normally, carrots are good for your eyes, but in your case they only increase your sense of smell."



"Perfect! I'll take 'em."



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