

July UV Safety Month



Understanding polarized sunglasses

In addition to prescription sunglasses, you may want to consider another option closely related to providing safer and better vision: polarized sunglasses. How can they benefit you?

What is glare?

First, let's learn about glare. When light bounces off of surfaces around us, it tends to scatter. This is because many surfaces in our world are uneven. However, when sunlight bounces off a smooth surface (such as a calm body of water), more of the light remains aligned together and reflects off of the surface at the same angle. If this angle happens to send the light straight into your eyes (such as when you are fishing), you experience an intense light called "glare".

Polarization

Polarized lenses have an embedded chemical film with molecules that are physically lined up to create "slots" through which light can pass. This means polarized lenses can help block out vertically-aligned light waves, such as the ones coming at you off the water's surface.

The benefits of polarized sunglasses

Polarized sunglasses provide increased clarity. While the view will be somewhat darker through polarized lenses, your surroundings will look less washed out.

Prescription polarized sunglasses carry a double benefit, providing protection from glare along with the vision correction needed for optimal eyesight. The benefits of this everyday glare protection add up. For example, many drivers report they no longer experience the fatigue they usually encounter after driving on a sunny day, since they are no longer fighting the sun's glare for hours at a time.

Conclusion

While polarized sunglasses can cost more than plain sunglasses, they are a sound investment that will protect an irreplaceable asset: your eyes! Whether you drive, fish, or just spend a lot of time in the sun, a pair of polarized sunglasses could increase your comfort while also protecting your sight.



Regular eye exams are important

Eye exams aren't just for correcting vision issues. They are also key in the early detection of systemic diseases like diabetes and hypertension. Your eye exam is one of the most important preventative care services available to you.

Sources: All About Vision, AAO, AOA, Glaucoma.org, NIH.gov

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