

Protecting Your Eyes From the Sun

Some researchers are predicting that UV-related eye disorders will increase over the next decade due to thinning of the ozone layer and an increased interest in outdoor activities among Americans. These eye problems include macular degeneration, cataracts, pterygium (a growth on the white of the eye that can eventually block vision), skin cancer around the eyelids and photokeratitis (corneal sunburn).

“We can’t stress enough how important it is to protect your eyes every day from the sun,” says Daniel D. Garrett, senior vice president of Prevent Blindness America on their Web site. “Even when the weather is overcast, the sun still emits intense, harmful rays.”

Wearing a wide-brimmed hat or cap and UV-absorbing eyewear is your best defense against UV damage to your eyes. According to , your wide-brimmed hat or cap will block roughly 50 percent of UV rays. For sunglasses, examine the labels carefully to make sure the lenses absorb 99 to 100 percent of both UVA and UVB rays, and make sure the glasses fit your face properly in order to receive the maximum protection.