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3 Ways to Improve Your Eyesight

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Yahoo Health has collected some tips you can use to sharpen your vision. Here are some of them:

1. Eat Right

Vitamins A, C, E, and minerals like copper and zinc are essential to eyesight. Antioxidants protect your macula from sun damage, and foods rich in sulfur, cysteine, and lecithin help protect the lens of your eye from cataract formation. The omega-3 fat DHA provides structural support to cell membranes that boost eye health.

2. Limit Environmental Toxins

External factors that contribute to eye damage include fluorescent lights, computer screens, environmental allergens, and chlorine in swimming pools.

3. Sleep

Getting enough sleep is essential for eye health. Sleep time allows your eyes to fully rest, repair, and recover.

To see the rest of their tips, you can click on the link below.

Sources:

» [Yahoo Health May 20, 2011](#)

Dr. Mercola's Comments:

Your eyes are your window to the world, and it's easy to take that "window" for granted until your vision begins to fail you. It's important that you realize now that failing vision is not an inevitable part of aging, though it is a common "side effect" of our modern lifestyles.



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For instance, obesity and diabetes are at epidemic proportions right now, and both can impact your eyesight.

Similarly, if you smoke or spend a lot of time in front of the computer, this too can take a toll on your vision health. What do all of these risk factors have in common? They're all lifestyle related. And as the Yahoo Health article above also noted, it's often primarily lifestyle basics that can impact your vision. So along with eating right, limiting environmental toxins and sleeping, as Yahoo suggested, what else can you do to maintain healthy vision?

Most Powerful Antioxidants for Your Eyes

The job of an antioxidant compound is to neutralize dangerous free radicals in your body, including your eyes. Certain antioxidants have been shown to be of particular benefit to your eyes, and those most often talked about are:

- [Lutein](#)
- Zeaxanthin

Both of these nutrients, found in eggs, spinach, and other leafy green vegetables, may significantly reduce your [risk of age-related macular degeneration](#), a leading cause of blindness. So I recommend making it a point to include these foods, in their raw, undamaged form, in your diet.



That said, science is now revealing that astaxanthin is really the [ULTIMATE carotenoid for eye health](#) and the prevention of blindness. It's a much more powerful antioxidant than both lutein and zeaxanthin, and has been found to have protective benefits against a number of eye-related problems, including:

Cataracts	Age-related macular degeneration (ARMD)	Cystoid macular edema
Diabetic retinopathy	Glaucoma	Inflammatory eye diseases (i.e., retinitis, iritis, keratitis, and scleritis)
Retinal arterial occlusion	Venous occlusion	

Astaxanthin is produced only by the microalgae *Haematococcus pluvialis* when its water supply dries up, forcing it to protect itself from ultraviolet radiation. It's the algae's survival mechanism—Astaxanthin serves as a "force field" to protect the algae from lack of nutrition and/or intense sunlight. There are only two main sources of astaxanthin: the microalgae that

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produce it, and the sea creatures that consume the algae (such as salmon, shellfish, and krill).

New Nutrient to Help Protect Your Vision

[Dr. Mark Tso](#) of the Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins University has aptly demonstrated that astaxanthin easily crosses into the tissues of the eye and exerts its effects safely and with more potency than any of the other carotenoids, without adverse reactions.

Specifically, Tso determined astaxanthin could help ameliorate or prevent light-induced damage, photoreceptor cell damage, ganglion cell damage, and damage to the neurons of the inner retinal layers. Other researchers (Shimidzu et al, Bagchi, [Martin et al](#), and [Beutner](#)) have since confirmed Dr. Tso's finding that astaxanthin is the most powerful antioxidant ever discovered for eye health, giving your eyes an additional layer of long-term protection.

For example, eye fatigue, eyestrain, blurring and diplopia (aka "double vision," caused by unequal action of your eye muscles) are problems for many people today who work in front of computer displays for long periods of time. Research shows astaxanthin may be beneficial for such issues:

- A [2002 Japanese study by Nagaki](#) set out to examine the effects, if any, of astaxanthin on these types of visual problems among computer workers. They found that giving these workers just 5 mg of astaxanthin daily for four weeks resulted in a 46 percent reduction in eyestrain and improved eye focusing.
- Another [Japanese study by Nakamura in 2004](#) found similarly positive effects on eyestrain at doses of 4 mg, and even better effects at 12 mg. In fact, there are now NINE different human clinical astaxanthin studies published in the area of eye fatigue, all showing positive results.



Additional studies have demonstrated that natural astaxanthin supplementation can also help with a wide range of other common eye issues, including the following:

Reducing eye soreness , dryness, tiredness and blurred vision	Preventing eye fatigue from occurring in healthy people
Improving retinal capillary blood flow	Improving your eye's ability to focus by enabling the lens to more easily adjust
Improving depth perception by 46 percent	Reducing ocular inflammation (Suzuki 2006)

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Astaxanthin also helps maintain appropriate eye pressure levels that are already within the normal range, and supports your eyes' energy levels and visual acuity.

Krill oil is a great source of both healthy omega-3 fat (which I'll discuss below) and astaxanthin, but there are also astaxanthin supplements on the market that are specifically formulated to support optimal eye health.

If you are going to give astaxanthin a try, I recommend starting with 4 mg per day.

Lifestyle Basics for Healthy Eyes

Protecting your eyesight as you age involves many of the same commonsense strategies that will help you prevent chronic disease of all kinds. This includes:

- **[Care for your cardiovascular system](#)**. High blood pressure can cause damage to the miniscule blood vessels on your retina, obstructing free blood flow.

One of the [primary ways to maintain optimal blood pressure is to avoid fructose](#). Research by Dr. Richard Johnson, chief of the division of kidney disease and hypertension at the University of Colorado, shows that consuming 74 grams or more per day of fructose (equal to 2.5 sugary drinks) increases your risk of having blood pressure levels of 160/100 mmHg by 77 percent!



- **Normalize your blood sugar**. Excessive sugar in your blood can pull fluid from the lens of your eye, affecting your ability to focus. And, it can damage the blood vessels in your retina, also obstructing blood flow. To keep your blood sugar in a healthy range, follow my [comprehensive nutrition guidelines](#), [exercise](#) and avoid excess sugar, [especially fructose](#).
- **Eat plenty of fresh dark green leafy vegetables, especially kale**. Studies have shown that a diet rich in dark leafy greens helps support eye health, and those with the highest consumption of carotenoid-rich vegetables, especially ones rich in lutein and zeaxanthin, had increased vision health.
- **Get plenty of healthy animal-based omega-3 fat**. A study published in the [August 2001 issue of Archives of Ophthalmology](#) found that consuming animal-based omega-3 fatty acids was protective of your healthy vision. Unfortunately, due to widespread pollution and fish farming, fish is no longer an ideal source for omega-3 fats unless you can verify its purity. My favorite alternative is krill oil.
- **Avoid trans fats**. A diet high in [trans fat](#) appears to contribute to macular degeneration by interfering with omega-3 fats in your body. Trans fat is found in many processed

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foods and baked goods, including margarine, shortening, fried foods like French fries, fried chicken and doughnuts, cookies, pastries and crackers.

- **Avoid aspartame.** Vision problems are one of the many potential [acute symptoms of aspartame poisoning](#).
- **Quit smoking.** Smoking increases free radical production throughout your body, and puts you at risk for less-than-optimal health in many ways, including the risk of decreased vision.

Relaxing Your Mind and Your Eyes Also Crucial to Optimal Vision

Interestingly, your mind may have a significant impact on [how well you can see](#). Research by Harvard University psychologist Ellen Langer and colleagues found that when people were [primed to believe they had excellent eyesight](#), their vision improved. Likewise, when participants were told their eyesight would improve with practice, it did. The same occurred when people adopted a "try and you will succeed" mindset -- they tried, and their vision successfully improved.

Your thoughts can influence how well you see in part because your mind is the source of much of the stress from outside sources brought to bear upon your eyes.



Every thought of effort in your mind, of whatever sort, transmits a motor impulse to your eye, and every such impulse causes a deviation from the normal in the shape of your eyeball and lessens your foveal sensitivity.

Therefore, if you want to have ideal vision you must minimize stress in your mind. Mental strain of any kind always produces conscious or unconscious eyestrain and if the strain takes the form of an effort to see, an error of refraction is always produced. So while you cannot "make" yourself see, by learning to control your thoughts you can accomplish that end indirectly.

How Relaxation Helps You See

When a disturbing thought is replaced by one that relaxes, your squint disappears, the double vision and the errors of refraction are corrected and this is as true of abnormalities of long standing as of those produced voluntarily. In a fraction of a second the highest degrees of refractive error may be corrected, a squint may disappear, or the blindness of amblyopia may be relieved. If the relaxation is only momentary, the correction is momentary. When it becomes permanent, the correction is permanent.

This relaxation cannot, however, be obtained by any sort of effort. It is fundamental that you understand this; for so long as you think, consciously or unconsciously, that relief from strain may be obtained by another strain your improvement will be delayed.

That is why RELAXING your eyes and [addressing the stressors](#) that contribute to the stress are the keys to help you recover your vision. You can [read more about this system to restore your vision naturally](#), which I personally used successfully to regain my own vision without the use of glasses or contacts, [here](#).

The program noted above takes time and dedication, but you can combine it with the [Eyeport System](#) -- a patented, clinically proven, and FDA-cleared vision training system, which helps improve your vision fitness and relieve your visual stress in a far shorter time, about 10 minutes a day. Now, this is not a quick fix if you have a serious visual dysfunction, but it is a pretty amazing solution for relieving daily eye stress. Remember, though, you should always check with your vision specialist prior to any vision therapy.

Temporary conditions may contribute to the strain to see that result in poor eyesight, but its foundation lies in wrong habits of thought.

Very seldom is the impairment or destruction of vision due to any fault in the construction of your eye. Of two equally good pairs of eyes, one will retain perfect sight to the end of life, and the other will lose it in kindergarten simply because one looks at things without effort and the other does not.



So in addition to improving the nutrients and antioxidants your central nervous system and eye receive by focusing on high-quality nutrition, as discussed above, you can also support eyesight by optimizing blood flow through relaxation and controlling your thoughts. Mental strain may produce many different kinds of eyestrain, but there is only one solution for all of them, namely, relaxation.