

Do Sunglasses Really Protect My Eyes?

Chronic exposure to ultraviolet radiation in sunlight has been implicated in a number of serious ocular diseases, including growths on the conjunctiva called pinguecula and pterygia, cataracts and possibly age-related macular degeneration.

Eye Protection is Key

Eye protection is the cornerstone of good ocular health. Recent research has shown that the time of maximum risk for ultraviolet radiation (UVR) damage to the eyes is very different from the time of maximum risk to the skin. Risk to the skin is greatest when the sun is highest in the sky: between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM. Due to the anatomical position of the eye within the orbit, ocular UVR exposure peaks not when the sun is at its zenith, but when the solar angle is lower and closer to parallel with the visual axis. So rather than at solar noon, maximum ocular UVR exposure occurs between 8:00 AM and 10:00 AM and between 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM. Unfortunately, these are hours when people may be less likely to wear sunglasses.

The Right Outdoor Eyewear

Beyond UVR protection, the right outdoor eyewear can help improve vision and comfort in bright sunlight when golfing or playing tennis. Polarized lenses contain a special filter that blocks reflected light, reducing glare. Polarized sunglasses improve comfort and visibility, as well as improving contrast sensitivity.

A good pair of prescription sunglasses with a frame that wraps can not only protect from the wind, but also improve enjoyment and performance of sports. Besides boaters, outdoor enthusiasts who benefit most from polarized sunglasses include golfers, joggers, skiers and bikers who may enjoy a clearer view along with elimination of glare.



Helping You Protect Your Eyes

For assistance selecting the best outdoor eyewear to protect your eyes, please call Dr. Alexandra Konowal at 239-948-7555 or visit our website at www.drkonowal.com.

