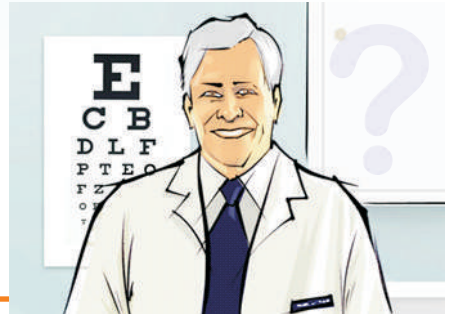


## Ask The Eye Doctor



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Most times, wrong practices and beliefs are products of wrong answers passed down from person to person and from generation to generation. In this issue, we intend to present valid answers to some questions from our patients on eye health and at the same time inspire our audience to make it a point of duty to seek answers from the right sources always.

diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol could be found. So eye exams are important in taking care of your overall health.

**I cannot see someone's face from afar until they come close to me, what is wrong?**

?3

**VCGi:** Every normal functioning eye can see clearly no matter how far away, distance vision is usually at infinity. If you notice that things are only clear when they are close, you have a problem with your eyes. It is not normal; an eye exam will reveal your class of problem. Have your eyes checked.

**I have headaches almost all the time, could it be from my eyes?**

?4

**VCGi:** If you don't have any major health issue like hypertension, malaria, or migraine, having an eye exam is highly recommended. The eye is responsible for most of the headaches people experience. Headaches caused by the eyes are usually at the front of the head, the sides, as well as the back of the head. If you are a lens wearer, wrong spectacle lenses could also cause headaches, you possibly need a re-examination or an update.

**How often should I have my eyes checked?**

?1

**VCGi:** As an adult over 18 years, you should have eye exams every 2 years, adults over 60 years should see an eye doctor every year or as recommended by their eye doctor. Children should have their first eye exam not later than age 6, so that any developmental problems could be identified early.

**I can see very well, why should i have my eyes checked?**

?2

**VCGi:** There is a lot more to an eye exam than just checking whether you can see well or not. During a comprehensive eye exam, your overall eye health will be examined; internal problems that may not show any symptom and even other serious health problems like

## Someone said using glasses can spoil the eyes, is it true? ?5

VCGi: Glasses do not worsen the eye, rather it **makes** objects clearer and your brain appreciates better vision. After a while you notice that when you take your glasses off, your vision is not as clear as with the glasses and you are tempted to think that your eyes has gone worse. No, It is because your brain has gotten used to the better vision from your glasses, when you take it off, the brain has to re-adjust to the way you initially saw with your eyes without glasses.

## I don't want to wear glasses, can't I just take drugs or use eye drops? ?6

VCGi: Drugs are chemical substances that interact with our body to cause a specific effect. Your lens is not that type of substance. Drugs cannot do what your lens will do which is directing light, neither can lenses do what drugs are to do. They are both different and can work together. Drugs will help to improve or maintain the health of the eyes while lenses will help to properly stimulate the eyes so that you can get the best result.

## Is my child not too young to be wearing glasses? ?7



VCGi: No child is too young to wear lenses if it corrects a problem. If a child is identified to have challenges with sight that requires

glasses, usually it is prescribed, depending on the child's responsiveness. Just like a child learns how to talk and walk, a child learns how to see. When a child is not seeing well during the developmental stage of the eyes (btw 0-10years), the eyes are poorly developed. The child will grow up to have lazy eyes which will never improve again even with lenses. Depriving a child that needs lenses is unfair and can cause permanent damage to the child's adult years.

## When I collected my glasses, I was told it will correct my eyes and I will stop using it. My eyes haven't corrected since, why? ?8



VCGi: Glasses will not correct the eyes, it corrects vision- means it makes you see better and clearer. The reason you are not seeing clearly is primarily because of the way the eye is directing light into your eyes. Glasses will help in directing the light properly for you to have a clear image. Removing the glasses leaves the eyes to the same initial way it was. You don't stop using your glasses except an eye exam says so. You are expected to do a review after two years of collecting your glasses or yearly depending on the problem.

## I could read small letters before, but now I can't, why? ?9

VCGi: Congratulations, you are obviously growing old. Just like the hair turns white, the skin wrinkles; the eyes age too. Usually, when a person gets towards 40 years, the ability to read tiny prints at normal distance starts to decline. You begin to stretch your hand farther away to see them and require extra light. It is called presbyopia, it is not a disease, it is just

aging and you will need doctor-recommended lenses for the purpose of reading.

### I know someone that is 80 years old and can still read with his eyes, how can you explain that? ?10

**VCGi:** Some people are short sighted; they can see things that are close very well at the expense of things that are far away. This challenge becomes advantageous at an older age as they still can read clearly even after 40years. Others have what is called nuclear sclerosis, which makes the lens dense and clouding, this imparts reading ability to the eye, although it is not permanent. Diabetic patients can also have fluctuations in their reading ability based on the level of their blood sugar. When the sugar level is high, the person is able to read with the eye, when it is low, reading is impaired. Finally, for some, the grace of God is at work and this natural law is suspended.

### Do lenses expire? ?11

**VCGi:** Lenses do not expire like edible items and other such things although lens materials are vulnerable to changes because of various factors such as scratch, breakage etc, but they don't expire. It is the eyes that changes that makes your lenses ineffective especially if they have been working fine before. So when your lenses seem not to be working fine, see your Eye Doctor.

### Can I buy reading glasses from the market? ?12

**VCGi:** NO, reading glasses come in different powers and each serves for different ages. Only an eye exam from a qualified eye care professional can reveal what you basically need. Your eye doctor will put many things into consideration like comfort, compatibility with your age and your eye and health status. In an attempt to solve a problem, you could end up damaging your eyes or causing more problems.

### I was diagnosed of hypertension and diabetes, ever since, I discovered I cannot see clearly. Can hypertension or diabetes affect the eyes? ?13



Hypertension and diabetes affect the eye very remarkably. In most cases, an eye exam becomes the first pointer to suspect a person has diabetes or hypertension. Both of them affect the retina (seeing part of the eye). Once you are confirmed to have any of them, alongside taking your routine medications, a regular yearly eye exam is important. The best you can do for your eye is to ensure your sugar level or blood pressure is regularly monitored at normal levels; else you stand the risk of becoming blind over time.

### I was told I have glaucoma and have been treated with eye drops; do I need to do anything else? ?14

**VCGi:** Glaucoma is a leading cause of blindness, it is not treated. It is managed over a lifetime. When an eye drop is prescribed for glaucoma, you don't stop using it, you use it every day of a life time or as recommended by your eye doctor. Even if you had glaucoma surgery, you still need to maintain your pressures. Ideally, you should have eye check once in every three months and there are other nerve enhancing drugs you could take routinely as well.

## My mother has glaucoma; do I need to be afraid too? ?15

VCGi: You don't need to be afraid; you only need to be well informed. It has been established that glaucoma runs in families. Once you have a relative diagnosed of glaucoma, the rest of the family members should of necessity go for glaucoma screening. The best key to handling glaucoma is early detection. Do well to have your eyes and that of your siblings comprehensively examined.

## They say we can use early morning urine/salt & sugar water/fish oil/ bitter kola etc to cure cataract, glaucoma and all other eye problems. Is it true? ?16

VCGi: Please don't use your eye for experiment; you may not like the result in the end. Most of these harmful practices have damaged the eyes of many, and in most cases it is irreversible. When you have any complain with your eyes, visit a qualified eye care professional, and be very sensitive with whatever you are asked to apply to the eyes. Remember, you are entitled to a pair of eyes all through life, losing them could be very costly.

## I was told I need eye operation, are they going to bring out my eye and put it back again? ?17

VCGi: Many people have similar fears when we talk to them about eye surgeries. Although, eye surgeries are very delicate and require the greatest tact, you can be rest assured it is safe, when it is done by competent hands. The surgeon will work on your eye while it is in the socket, they won't bring it out and put it back. The purpose of the surgery is to improve your sight, but please be careful before you surrender your eyes for operation. Be sure you know the surgeon and can attest to his competence.

## The gift of sight is priceless, protect your eyes ...VCGi Awareness team

**Final Words:** For further questions and if you have any eye complain, please come to us, you will be examined free of charge NB: you must come along with a copy of this bulletin. You can also come and request for us to give free lectures in your institution or carry out mobile out clinic services

**Vision Care Givers international (VCGi)** is a non-governmental human development organization dedicated to the vision of taking quality, efficient & sustainable eye health to all nations of the world. We believe the gift of sight can make a difference between a life of opportunity and a life of poverty. We are devoted to making this gift available to everyone in every place across the globe.

**With our team of experts in the eye care profession, we provide:**

- Excellent eye care services
- Consultancy services to schools, religious institutions, Hospitals and corporate bodies
- Community/School eye health programmes
- Eye health awareness campaign and advocacy
- Medical Missions

Eye Health Bulletin is produced by VCGi as part of our eye health awareness campaign, with the sole aim of raising eye health experts everywhere. You can participate by sponsoring its printing or being a distributor.

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