EXERCISE, NUTRITION AND EYE HEALTH

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Physical activity has long been known to create a healthy body. It now has become evident (thru medical research); as exercise benefits our body it is also beneficial to our eye health. Science has now found a direct correlation between increased brain activities during exercise and improving our chance to avoid, and manage many eye conditions.

Our society has become more sedentary than ever before, less activity makes everyone more prone to obesity. As we see more cases of obesity, we see more of the diseases that are associated with obesity. Diabetes, and Hypertension are two main diseases. But as our bodies become sick with obesity, our brains also suffer. Physical activity is a work out for our bodies and our brains. Our eyes are a part of our brains.

Scientists have concluded that as few as fifteen minutes of physical exercise can extend a person’s lifespan by approximately three years. Activities as simple as walking show benefits to our bodies and our minds. Some scientific studies have recommended incorporating exercise as part of their treatment for many diseases, as it is effective “cheap and safe.”

Researchers have concluded that older adults who have an active lifestyle and exercised three or more times a week had a 70% lower risk of developing “wet age related macular degeneration.”

As our society struggles with weight so do our children. Morbid childhood obesity is at an epidemic stage in the world today, and most scientists attribute it to the lack of physical activity. In a recent study done with children, it suggests when compared two groups of six year olds, one group was allowed to spend extra time outside, and another group spent more time inside. The children that were allowed to spend more time outside had developed less severe myopia than the children who spent fewer time outside.

Another study suggested that a limited amount of sunshine (UV) plays a significant roll in the development of children’s eyes. Although protecting every individual from UV exposure is and has been considered an important tool against many diseases.

During a routine comprehensive eye examination, the examining doctor may see signs of a potential health risk, a danger our patient might be completely unaware of. Some diseases are present without any signs or symptoms, but diagnosing the onset will enable early and prompt treatment, possibly saving our patient’s life.

Symptoms or signs that alert the examining doctor, and ***possible*** medical conditions related are:

Red or bloody eyes – Hypertension

Bulging eyes – Thyroid disease

Yellow eyes – Diabetes

Rings around the cornea –

Droopy eyelids – Stroke

Cloudy Cornea – Cataracts

Pale Optic Nerve – Multiple Sclerosis or Brain tumor

Increasing Mucus – Dandruff or Acne Rosacea

A Symmetrical pupil – Stroke or Brain tumor

Different eye Color – Glaucoma, Inflammation

Disappearing Eyebrows – Thyroid disease

Persistent Stye – Cancer

The medical community is divided regarding dietary supplements. Most agree that any person deficient in nutrients necessitates the use of a dietary supplements.

For most, the antioxidants dietary supplement have been proven helpful in lowering the risk for age related macular degeneration. It has been especially helpful when Omega 3’s are used for dry eye syndrome. The balance between the ingredients is the primary concern for the medical community. Educating patients about reading the labels play a significant roll in their effectiveness.

As healthcare professionals, it is our responsibilities to help our patients’ understand the benefits of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. While we are able to provide education, the ultimate responsibility is our patients.

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