

Guard your good vision, experts say

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FDA offers tips on how to protect your eyes from dangers that could harm your sight.

(HealthDay)—Smoking, decorative contact lenses and laser pointers all pose a threat to your eyes, but sitting too close to the television or computer screen doesn't, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration says.

As part of Healthy Vision month in May, the FDA separates fact from fiction when it comes to protecting your eyes.

Many people believe it's legal to sell decorative [contact lenses](#) without a prescription. However, businesses that advertise these contact lenses as cosmetics or sell them without a prescription are breaking the law, the FDA warns.

You need to have an eye doctor assess your eyes and fit all contact lenses, because a poor fit can cause serious eye damage.

You also need to be aware that [laser pointers](#) and toys with lasers can cause permanent eye damage.

"A beam shone directly into a person's eye can injure it in an instant, especially if the laser is a powerful one," Dan Hewett, health promotion officer at FDA's Center for Devices and Radiological Health, said in an agency news release.

Smoking is another threat. It is a major risk factor for a disease called [macular degeneration](#), which destroys sharp, central vision. Other risk factors for macular degeneration include genetics, diet, exposure to bright sunlight, heart disease and [high blood pressure](#).

Using over-the-counter redness-reducing eye drops every day can also put your vision at risk. These drops may initially alleviate eye redness, but continued use may actually cause redness in your eyes, according to the FDA's Dr. Wiley Chambers. Limit the use of these [eye](#) drops to one or two days, he recommended.

The good news is that sitting too close to the television, computer monitor or movie theater screen won't cause [eye damage](#). Your eyes may feel tired after spending a lot of time in front of the TV or computer, but that can be remedied by giving your eyes a rest.

The FDA also says that eating lots of carrots is good for your eyes. The same is true for other dark-colored fruits and vegetables, such as peas and broccoli. And eating a healthy diet reduces your risk of type 2 diabetes, the leading cause of blindness in American adults.

More information: The U.S. National Eye Institute has more about [eye health](#).

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