

# EYESIGHT and WALKING



Eyesight is important for everyone to maintain independence, keep steady and move around safely.

Changes to eyesight are often gradual and can go unnoticed.

## What can you do each day?

- > Choose glasses to suit what you are doing – distance glasses when walking and reading glasses when reading.
- > Keep glasses clean.
- > Pause, and give your eyes time to adjust when moving from dark into light or light into dark.
- > Before getting up at night, turn on a bedside light. Keep your glasses within easy reach and use a torch if needed.
- > Wear a wide brimmed hat and sunglasses to reduce glare when outside.
- > When walking, scan the area for hazards such as uneven surfaces.

## What else can you do?

- > Take extra care on stairs, steps, step ladders and uneven ground, especially if you are wearing bifocals or multifocals (graded lenses). When looking through the lower half of graded lenses, it is easy to misjudge distances.
- > If you wear bifocals or multifocals while walking, ask your optometrist about single lens glasses.
- > Clearly mark the edges of steps with coloured strips so that they can be seen at all times, day and night.
- > Ensure that all walking areas are well lit (16 or 20 watt energy saving, 75 or 100 watt incandescent globes are recommended).





## How often should you get your eyes checked?

If you wear glasses, have your eyes checked at least:

- > every two years by an optometrist
- > every year by a doctor.

If you notice changes, make an appointment sooner.



## Who can help?

- > Your **Doctor** for concerns about your vision. Your doctor can refer you to other health professionals or any services you may be eligible for.
- > **Optometrists** can help to improve your vision and test for eye disease.

To find an optometrist near you, phone Commonwealth Carelink 1800 052 222, or look in the Yellow Pages or ring the Optometrists Association Australia (SA): (08) 7070 2615.

- > **The Royal Society for the Blind** offer advice on how to manage with vision problems (08) 8417 5599.
- > **Guide Dogs SA/NT** for advice on how to manage with vision problems: (08) 8203 8333.



## For more information

**Adelaide area:** Call 1300 0 FALLS (1300 0 32557) for information about falls prevention services that are close to you.

**Country SA:** Please contact your local health service for information about services close to you. You can also email the Country Health Falls Prevention coordinator at [Health.CHSAFallsPreventionProject@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:Health.CHSAFallsPreventionProject@health.sa.gov.au)

[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/falls](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/falls)

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\*SA Health Partnering with Consumers and Community Advisory Group



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