



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FACT OR MYTH? *The Truth Behind Eye Myths*

(Honolulu, Hawaii), October 11, 2010 – Did your mom tell you not to sit too close to the television because it will damage your eyes? Is that fact or a myth? Here are a few of the most common eye myths.

Fact or Myth:

Sitting too close to the television or extended exposure to a computer screen will damage your eyes. **MYTH.** Children may sit close to the television without damaging their vision. This, however, could be an indication that they might need glasses as they can not see well from further away. Your eyes can also become dry when looking at screens since you don't blink as much. "The quality of vision may fluctuate due to thinning of the tear film because of the lack of sufficient blinking," shared Christopher Tortora, M.D., of the Hawaiian Eye Center in Wahiawa, "however, this blurring or discomfort is usually temporary and does not cause permanent damage."

Squinting for an extended period of time will damage your vision. **MYTH.** The only damage caused by squinting could be to give you a headache as squinting involves contraction of the muscles in your face. Many people squint because they are trying to force their eyes to focus. By partially closing your eye lids, less light and thus less distortion enters the eyes. This temporarily improves the focus. "Squinting could be an indicator that you may need glasses," said Dr. Tortora,

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Eating carrots will improve your vision. FACT and MYTH. While your diet does play an important role in the function of your eyes and body, eating carrots all day will not change the quality of your vision. A deficiency of Vitamin A may lead to poor vision, however will not enhance vision. There are specific foods that are beneficial to the health of your eyes such as dark green vegetables which contain lutein and other anti-oxidants. The nutrients from various foods can protect the macula and may help prevent macular degeneration, a condition where there is loss of vision in the center of the eye that is most common in older adults.

Reading in dim light will eventually harm your vision. MYTH. Many have believed this as you have to strain to read in the dark. “You won’t harm the eyes by reading in the dark,” Dr. Tortora explains, “You may have some difficulty and will find vision easier with greater depth of focus in brighter lighting, but the dark won’t damage your eyes.”

Eye exercises can improve vision. MYTH. There is no evidence that exercises improve vision. Eye exercises can improve certain conditions, but will not improve your vision. “Eye exercises can improve what’s called ‘convergence,’ but should only be done if your doctor recommends them,” noted Dr. Tortora

Just remember that not everything your parents told you about your eyes when you were young is true!

Dr. Tortora, a board certified ophthalmologist, is host of “The Hawaiian Eye Show,” a weekly informational radio program about healthy vision. He and his colleagues at Hawaiian Eye Center are committed to educating the public about the importance of preventative eye care. To learn more about a variety of eye health issues, please call the Hawaiian Eye Center at 621-8488 where “*life has never looked better.*”

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