



PRESS RELEASE

TO: Editor in Charge

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vision Problems Happen at Any Age

May is Healthy Vision Month and the American Academy of Ophthalmology is promoting vision care for all ages

(Honolulu, Hawaii), May 13, 2009 – Vision is the most valued of all the five senses, and many remain complacent of how easily it can be taken away. Eye conditions and illnesses can affect anyone of any age, from newborns to the elderly. The American Academy of Ophthalmology designates May as Healthy Vision Month to promote awareness of early warning signs as well as to encourage regular visits with an eye care professional.

“There are many people that associate eye problems with getting older,” said Christopher Tortora, M.D., Medical Director at Hawaiian Eye Center in Wahiawa. “It is true that the elderly are at higher risk to develop eye problems, but it must not be assumed that these problems can’t start earlier in life.”

Infants and toddlers should be screened for common childhood eye problems during regular pediatric appointments. Common problems include strabismus (crossed eyes) and amblyopia (lazy eye). Vision testing is recommended for all children starting from around 3 years of age. A few warning signs of a child who may have vision problems include wandering or crossed eyes, a family history of childhood vision problems, redness, discharge, a disinterest in reading, and squinting while watching television.

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Young adults and those in middle-aged groups can also be affected by eye problems. African-Americans over the age of 40 may develop glaucoma, people with diabetes may develop diabetic retinopathy, and those over the age of 60 may develop macular degeneration and cataracts. If anyone falls into one of these categories or if there is a history of eye problems in the family, it's essential to check with an eye care professional to see have a complete eye exam. Individuals should have a complete eye exam at least once between the ages of 20 and 29, at least twice between the ages of 30 and 39, and every two to four years between the ages of 40 and 65.

Anyone over the age of 65 should be examined at least once every one to two years to check up on cataracts, glaucoma, macular degenerations, and other eye conditions. Those with diabetes should be examined every year.

“If you are experiencing any eye problems, regular visits to an eye care professional are essential,” said Dr. Tortora. “Early detection is the key to keeping eyes healthy and vision lasting.”

Healthy vision is something that can not be taken for granted. It should be closely taken care of so that it is able to last a lifetime.

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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