



PRESS RELEASE

To: News Editors & Directors

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Summer Eyewear Fashions Make it Possible to Be Trendy and Preserve Eye Health in Summer 2007

July is National UV Safety Month for Beachgoers and Barbeque-lovers alike

(Honolulu, Hawaii), July 2, 2007- With the longer days and the sun higher in the sky, thousands of Hawaii's residents find themselves squinting and seeing spots as soon as they step outside their door due to the stronger effect of the summer sun. Almost immediately the sunglasses come out of pockets and purses, but not all sun glasses are created equal. However, with just a little forethought and even with an eye toward fashion, everyone can select the best pair of sun glasses for summer plus take part in July's UV Safety Month with the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

"The key thing to look for in picking out a good pair of sunglasses is the UV factor," said Dr. Christopher Tortora, M.D., Medical Director at Wahiawa's Hawaiian Eye Center.

"You really want to choose a pair of glasses that blocks 99-100% of UV rays."

UV, or Ultra-violet, rays are rays that are located just past the violet portion of the visible light spectrum. With a wavelength longer than an X-ray, but shorter than visible light, UV rays are divided into three ranges, UVA, UVB, and UVC. Most UVC rays are filtered by the Earth's ozone layer, but UVA and UVB rays can cause serious damage to the eye's cornea, retina and lens.

UV rays are known to cause Pterygium, Skin cancers of the lids, Cataract and Age Related Macular Degeneration. As aging occurs, cataract and Age Related Macular Degeneration are leading causes of vision loss. In addition to selecting the right sunglasses to prevent damage to the eyes, regular checkups with an eye physician are key.

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Shoppers in the sunglass market can check how much a prospective pair blocks UV by looking on the label. A simple in-store test will show a good-quality pair of shades will not distort lines in flooring or ceilings when held a short way in front of the eye and then moved up and down and from side to side.

Summer fashions for 2007 feature big frames all-around and many include lighter gray or colored lenses. Fashionistas need not worry though, as darker lenses are not always better. In some cases, dark lenses might even be worse, as they cause the pupil to dilate and allow more light in without the protection of a high UV ray safety index. Again, the important thing to look for is the percentage of UV rays that a particular lens blocks.

Big is back this summer and eyes across the nation are glad to hear it. Large frames with bigger lenses offer more coverage and can shade a larger area around the eye. Wrap-around frames, also popular this year offer protection from wind, glare, dust and debris in addition to the UV protection factor.

“One additional way to take care of your eyes while you are outside is to make sure that your lens in the glasses is not scratched,” Dr. Tortora said. “Scratched lenses scatter light and can cause glare around the scratch.”

With a little help from sunglass designers plus just a bit of extra time at the store, everyone can have a pair of sun glasses that both protects the eye and makes even Hollywood’s hottest stars envious.

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 preventive eye care. To learn more about other eye health issues, please call Hawaiian Eye Center at 621-8448 where “*life has never looked better.*”

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