

Vigorous Exercise May Prevent Vision Loss

Exercise may have yet another benefit – vision protection. In a recent U.S. study, researchers found that vigorous exercise reduced the risk of cataracts and age-related macular degeneration. The study tracked approximately 41,000 runners for more than seven years. It suggested that people can possibly lessen their risk for these eye diseases by taking part in a vigorous fitness regimen. On average, running 2 to 4 km (1.2 to 2.5 miles) a day reduced the risk by 19% and running more than 4 km a day reduced the risk by 42% to 54%, compared with those who ran less than 2 km a day. It seems exercise could provide similar protective benefits for the eyes as it does for the heart and other bodily systems.

A cataract is a clouding of the eye's naturally clear lens, your eye becomes like a window that is frosted or yellowed. Cataracts are a leading cause of vision loss, especially as we age. Age-related macular degeneration reduces vision in the central part of the retina. Macular degeneration can cause sudden, severe loss of vision in the middle of your visual field. For more information on these and other eye diseases, visit <http://www.geteyesmart.org/eyesmart/diseases/>

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