

EDITORIAL

Eye Care : A Vision for a Healthier Tomorrow

In a world where technology continues to advance at an unprecedented pace, the field of eye care stands at the forefront of this transformative journey. As we look ahead to a healthier tomorrow, the importance of maintaining and enhancing our vision cannot be overstated. The eyes, often called the windows to the soul, play a crucial role in our daily lives, impacting everything from our ability to work and learn to our capacity to engage with the world around us.

The State of Eye Health Today: Globally, millions of people suffer from various eye conditions that can significantly impair their quality of life. Conditions like cataracts, glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration, and diabetic retinopathy are becoming increasingly prevalent. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that at least 2.2 billion people have a vision impairment or blindness, of whom at least 1 billion have a vision impairment that could have been prevented or has yet to be addressed. Vision impairment affects people of all ages, with the majority being over the age of 50. The impact of vision impairment can lead to lower productivity, decreased workforce participation, and higher rates of depression.

Innovation is driving significant progress in the field of ophthalmology. Advanced diagnostic tools, minimally invasive surgical techniques, and novel treatments are now available, offering hope to millions. The advent of artificial intelligence (A.I.) and machine learning in eye care has the potential to revolutionize early detection and treatment, ensuring better outcomes for patients. A.I.-powered diagnostic systems can analyse retinal images with remarkable accuracy, identifying conditions like diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma at an early stage.

Despite these advancements, one of the most critical aspects of maintaining eye health is regular eye examinations. These exams can detect problems early, often before symptoms appear, allowing for timely intervention. Regular eye check-ups are essential not only for those with existing eye conditions but also for individuals at risk, such as those with a family history of eye diseases or underlying health conditions like diabetes.

Educating the public about the importance of eye health is paramount. Community outreach programs that offer free eye screenings and educational resources can make a significant difference, especially in underserved areas. By raising awareness and providing access to essential eye care services, we can work towards reducing the global burden of vision impairment.

The Future of Eye Care: As we envision a healthier tomorrow, the future of eye care looks promising. Continued

K. Ranga Ravi
EDITOR

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Meritorious Award Presented to Sankar Foundation at Republic Day Celebrations



Sri Harendhira Prasad, IAS, Visakhapatnam District Collector presenting the award to Sankar Foundation at the Republic Day celebrations.

The prestigious Merit (Best NGO Award) Award has been presented to the Sankar Foundation on the occasion of Republic Day for their outstanding contributions in performing the highest number of eye surgeries and their exceptional outreach initiatives in rural areas. This award recognizes the Foundation's dedication and commitment to achieving avoidable blindness through the Dr. NTR Vaidya Seva program in this region.

Sri M Ramdas, Chairman of the Board of Trustees "congratulated all the doctors and staff for their excellent service to the needy. These awards draw public attention on the performance of the hospital and thus put more responsibility on all to do better in future. Therefore, we should not be complacent and put more effort and dedication to attain better performance to receive appreciation at the state and national level".

Sri A Krishna Kumar, Managing Trustee commended the doctors, paramedical staff and the employees of Sankar Foundation for their recognition and exhorted them to work with commitment to achieve further laurels.



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MERITORIOUS AWARD TO SANKAR FOUNDATION

The Certificate of Merit Award was presented by Sri Harendhira Prasad, IAS, Visakhapatnam District Collector in the presence of Sri Mayur Ashok, Joint Collector at the Republic Day celebrations held in the sprawling Police parade Grounds, Visakhapatnam.

The award was received by Sri K Radhakrishnan, GM and Sri K Bangar Raju, Dy General Manager (PR & Liaison) on behalf of Sankar Foundation.

The award was presented to SF "In recognition of the commitment, compassion and dedication to serve

the under privileged and needy with super speciality eye care free of cost and for delivering high quality treatment and research in the discipline of Ophthalmology"

This award is a testament to the unwavering dedication and hard work of the entire team at the Sankar Foundation, who continue to make a profound impact on society through their selfless service.

The Dr. NTR Vaidya Seva program, a flagship scheme of the Andhra Pradesh government, aims to provide quality healthcare to the poor. The Sankar Foundation's alignment with this

program has been instrumental in their success, ensuring that even the most remote communities receive the eye care they desperately need.

It is worth to share that Sankar Foundation has performed 33,175 eye surgeries, out of which 68% is covered under Dr NTR Vaidya Seva and also screened 1,96,148 Out patients during the year 2024.

The Outreach team also significantly contributed by conducting 505 free eye screening camps in this region and screened 34,305 and performed 12,903 surgeries free of cost to the patients during the year 2024.

A Vision for a Healthier Tomorrow

research and development are paving the way for innovative treatments and technologies that can restore and enhance vision. Gene therapy, stem cell research, and the development of bioengineered tissues are some of the exciting frontiers that hold the potential to treat previously untreatable eye conditions.

Ensuring a healthier future for our eyes requires a collective effort. Governments, healthcare providers, researchers, and individuals must come together to prioritize eye health. Vision impairment can lead to lower productivity, decreased workforce participation, and higher rates of depression. Cataracts and uncorrected refractive errors are the leading causes of vision impairment. By investing in research, promoting public awareness, and ensuring access to quality eye care services, we can make significant strides towards a world where preventable vision impairment is a thing of the past.

In conclusion, eye care is not just about preserving vision; it is about enhancing the overall quality of life. With continued innovation, education, and a commitment to accessible healthcare, we can truly create a vision for a healthier tomorrow. **Let us all take the necessary steps today to ensure a brighter, clearer future for generations to come.**

Republic Day Celebrated



Sankar Foundation Eye Hospital, Naidutota celebrated the Republic Day with patriotic fervor. Dr T Raveendra, Director, CQI & Research and HOD Glaucoma unfurled the National Flag and took the salute to mark the occasion. Dr Nasrin, Dr Siresha, Sri K V Venugopal, DGM and large number of employees and students participated on the occasion.



Free Eye Screening Camps Organised for Visually Impaired Divyangans

Sri MN Harendhira Prasad, IAS, District Collector, Visakhapatnam requested Sankar Foundation to conduct free eye screening camps in four schools for visually impaired students on behalf of the State and District Legal Services Authority. These camps were aimed to bring hope and potential improvement among the students.



True to its spirit of extending its services to society, accordingly, Sankar Foundation organised special free eye screening camps for the Visually Impaired Divyangans of Netra Vidyalaya, Mangamaripeta, Bheemili, Government Residential School for Blind, Yendada, Visakha Model School for Blind near Law College, Madhurawada, and Helen Keller Memorial Association, MVP Colony, on 24th and 25th January 2025.

Dr. B. Rahul and Dr. Manali Gajmal, assisted by our dedicated staff, screened a total of 180 special children from the four schools. These children were advised for further treatment at the main hospital in Naidutota. Sri M. Chandrasekhar, Relationship Manager at Sankar Foundation, organised the camps with great dedication.

Free Eye Screening Camp at District Court

The Bar Association of Visakhapatnam, in association with Sankar Foundation, organised a free eye screening camp for the advocates and bar members at District Court, Visakhapatnam, on 28th January 2025. Dr. Himaja, assisted by our staff, screened 145 advocates during the camp, and 10 advocates were advised for cataract surgeries.



DO YOU KNOW?

EYE FACTS

- Did you know that the average eye blink takes 1/3 of a second?
- Seeing is so important that it takes up more than 50% of the brain's functionality.
- New born don't shed tears, though they do know how to cry.
- Your eye blink about 15-20 times in a minute.
- The most active muscles in your body are in your eyes.

What is unique to the eye?

At the back of your eye sits the retina, which is the light-sensitive layer of tissue that converts light into electric signals. These electrical signals travel from the retina through the optic nerve to the brain. Then the brain turns the signals into the images you see. It's a **complex collection of blood vessels** and like our irises, is entirely unique to us.



What are the parts of the eye?

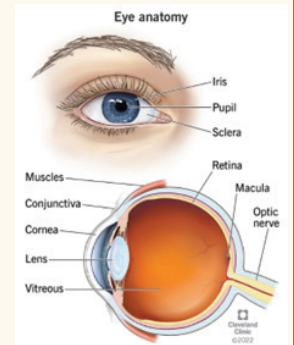
Anatomy of the Eye

- Choroid. Layer containing blood vessels that lines the back of the eye and is located between the retina (the inner light-sensitive layer) and the sclera (the outer white eye wall).
- Ciliary Body
- Cornea
- Fovea
- Iris
- Lens
- Macula
- Optic Nerve



How many parts are in eyes?

- The eye itself is made of **7 general components** that all work together to keep us seeing well every day. Cornea - The cornea is the outermost layer of the eye and is primarily responsible for focusing the light that comes into our eyes. There are 5 layers to the cornea. (Source: National Eye Institute & Eye Care Plus)



Highest Blind population in India

- India is home to one third of the world's blind population and these numbers are expected to go up further. Unfortunately, more than 80% of the blindness and visual impairment is either preventable or treatable.

What is unique about the eye?

- Your eyes focus on **50 different objects every second**. Your eyes can detect a candle flame 1.7 miles away. Your iris has 256 unique characteristics, while your fingerprint only has 40. Our ears and nose grow throughout life, but eyes stay the same size from birth. Our eyes contain about 107 million sensitive cells.

How many times do we blink a day?

- How many times does the average person blink per day? Most adults blink about 14 to 17 times a minute. That comes out to 840 to 1,020 blinks every hour. If you sleep for 8 hours every night, that means you probably blink about **13,440 to 16,320 times a day** while you're awake.

How strong is the eye?

- Your eye can detect over **10 million color hues**, but it can't pick up ultraviolet or infrared light. Information overload: Your eyes are capable of processing 36,000 pieces of information per hour. They efficiently deliver data to your brain to process so that you can contextualize and evaluate it immediately.

(Sourced from sciencedirect.com :

Inputs **K. Bangar Raju, Dy General Manager (PR & Liaison)**



Pendurthy MLA inaugurates NTPC sponsored Free Eye Camp

As part of their CSR initiative, NTPC, in association with Sankar Foundation, conducted a free eye screening camp at Mutyalampalem village in Parawada mandal of Ankapalle district on 27th January 2025.



The eye camp was inaugurated by Sri P. Ramesh Babu, MLA, Pendurthy, in the presence of Sri Sameer Sharma, Chief General Manager, NTPC, and Sri V. Ramesh Kumar, DGM (PC & CR).

Addressing the gathering, Sri Ramesh Babu highly commended the services of Sankar Foundation in combating avoidable blindness and assisting the poor in this region with commitment and dedication.



Sri Sameer Sharma stated that NTPC will continue to support Sankar Foundation in organizing such eye screening camps around NTPC to enhance the quality of life in the villages.

A total of 424 patients were screened from Mutyalampalem, Tikkavanipalem, and nearby villages. Glasses were prescribed for 287 patients. **A highlight of the eye camp was the spot delivery of 273 spectacles of their choice.**



Lies and truth exist in a stare.

Outstanding Faculty Award presented to Prof. Krishna Prasad



Prof Krishna Prasad receiving the award

Dr Minu Bajpai, Vice-President, National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences (NBEMS), New Delhi has presented the **Outstanding Performance Teaching Faculty Award** to Prof. Pallem Krishna Prasad, Director Medical Education, Sankar Foundation Eye Hospital and Institute, at Association of National Board Accredited Institutions (the ANBAI Andhra Pradesh & Telangana State, AP & TS Chapters) "Medical Teachers' Day Event 2024 Conference" held in Visakhapatnam on 21st December, 2024. The Faculty Award recognises his dedication and contributions to medical education.

This prestigious award was presented in the presence of Dr. D.S.V.L. Narasimham, Vice-Chancellor, Dr. NTR University of Health Sciences, Dr. Thirumal Prasad, President, ANBAI AP & TS and Dr. Khub Chand, General Secretary, ANBAI AP&TS. The award was presented in the conference attended by 189 delegates from various medical education institutions in the country.

Patients received free consultations and medicines at the camp. Additionally, 30 patients were taken to Sankar Foundation Hospital for cataract surgeries and then dropped back to their destinations after successful eye surgeries. Dr. Srinija screened the patients, assisted by Sri S. Appala Raju, Senior Manager; Sri Arun Kumar, Manager; Sri G. Eswar Rao, Manager; Sri P. Ramu, Manager from the Optical

"Outstanding Ophthal Teacher of India Award" Presented to Dr. Raveendra



Dr T Raveendra receiving the award at Chandigarh

Dr T Raveendra, Director, Continuous Quality Improvement & Research and HOD Glaucoma Dept of Sankar Foundation has been conferred "Outstanding Ophthal Teacher of India Award" at AGM of Federation of Ophthalmic Teachers of India (FOTI) held under PG Institute of India, Chandigarh on 11th January.

Dr Raveendra was among 75 doctor teachers from across the country who were recognised for their contributions to teaching Post-graduate students and Fellows in Ophthalmology.

Sri A Krishna Kumar, Managing Trustee, Sri K Radhakrishnan, GM and doctors congratulated Dr Raveendra on his achievement and lauded his efforts in advancing Ophthalmic education.

The body of FOTI will send recommendations to National Medical Council on the needs of educational mechanisms and promoting positive reforms in the field of Ophthalmology.

Department; Sri S. Ratnam Raju, In-charge Optometry; and Mrs. Haritha from the Pharmacy.

Photo Captions : 1) Sri P Ramesh Babu, MLA inaugurating the free eye camp in the presence of Sri Sameer Sharma, Chief General Manager and others. 2 & 3) Sri Ramesh Babu, MLA and Sri Sameer Sharma, Chief General Manager speaking on the occasion. 4 & 5) Eye screening camp visuals.



Sankranti Festivities Celebrated with Togetherness and Tradition

The Sankranti festival holds a special place in the hearts of the Sankar Foundation family. Celebrated with great enthusiasm and joy, Sankranti at Sankar Foundation is a vibrant event that brings together doctors, employees, paramedical staff and students in a spirit of unity and festivity. Sri K Krishna Kumar, Managing Trustee and Sri K Radhakrishnan, GM congratulated the winners of the competitions organized to mark the occasion. Later, Sri Radhakrishnan, Dr Ajay Sharma, Dr Nasrin, Dr Siresha distributed prizes to the winners.

Traditional Rituals and Pujas: The festivities begin with traditional rituals and pujas, invoking blessings for prosperity and well-being. The premises are adorned with colorful rangoli, by the women employees adding to the festive ambiance.

Employees and their families showcase their talents through various sporting events, cultural performances, including folk and classical dances, music, and skits that reflect the rich cultural heritage of the region. Sri KV Venugopal, DGM compered the programme.

The Sankranti festivities at Sankar Foundation are a testament to the organization's dedication to fostering a sense of belonging and joy among all its members. It is a time to celebrate togetherness, cultural heritage, and the shared commitment to improving eye health and well-being in the community.

**Festive Moments :
Capturing the Joy of
Sankranti at
Sankar Foundation**



DM&HOs, DPMs hail Outreach Initiatives of Sankar Foundation

The District Medical & Health Officers (DM&HO) and District Project Managers in Visakhapatnam, Srikakulam, Vijayanagaram, Parvathipuram Manyam, Anakapalle, and Alluri Sitarama Raju districts have lauded the remarkable outreach initiatives of Sankar Foundation.

These programs have been instrumental in eliminating avoidable blindness in rural, tribal areas, significantly improving the quality of life for countless individuals. Sankar Foundation extends heartfelt gratitude to the district medical and health department officials for their unwavering support, which has been instrumental in elevating the hospital to new heights of excellence.

We received this feedback from the officials when our Outreach team extends greetings and presented the Annual Report and monthly Newsletter of Sankar Foundation on the occasion of New Year and Sankranti.

Through comprehensive eye screening camps, door-to-door surveys, and free eye surgeries, Sankar Foundation has reached remote villages, providing essential eye care services to those in need. The Foundation's dedicated outreach team, ophthalmologists, optometrists, and paramedical staff have conducted 505 free eye camps, screened 34,305 patients and performed 12,903 eye surgeries free of cost to the patients during the year 2024.

The success of these initiatives is a testament to the unwavering commitment of Sankar Foundation to its mission of eradicating avoidable blindness. The collaboration with local communities, government bodies, and corporate partners has been pivotal in achieving these milestones.

The impact of these outreach programs is evident in the smiles and gratitude of the beneficiaries, who now have the gift of sight and the ability to lead independent lives. Sankar Foundation continues to be a beacon of hope and a leader in community eye care, setting an example for others to follow.

Photo captions:

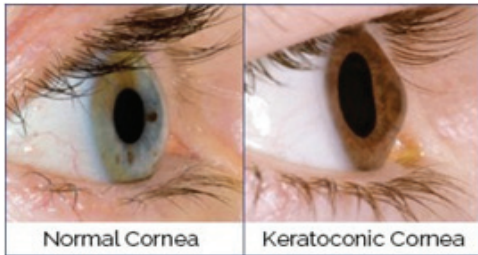
- 1) New Year & Sankranti greetings extended by Sri Appalaraju, Senior Manager, (Outreach) to Dr Jagadeeswar Rao, DH&HO, Visakhapatnam
- 2) Our Outreach team Sri Appalaraju, Senior Manager, Sri M Arunkumar, Manager (Outreach) extending greetings to Dr Meenakshi, DPM and Suptd, REH, Visakhapatnam.
- 3) Smt Dr Jeevan Rani, DM&HO, Vijayanagaram looking at our Annual Report of Sankar Foundation.
- 4) Sri N Suryanarayana, Dy DM&HO and DPM, Vijayanagaram
- 5) Sri Ravikumar, Anakapalle DM&HO
- 6) Sri GV Ramana Kumar, DPM, Anakapalle
- 7) Sri Trinadh Rao, DPM, Srikakulam
- 8) Dr Sukumar, DPM, Parvathipuram manyam district
- 9) Dr Visweswara Naidu, DPM, ASR District



"Understanding Keratoconus : A Simplified Guide"

What is Keratoconus?

Keratoconus is a progressive eye condition where the normally round cornea (the clear, dome-shaped surface at the front of the eye) thins and begins to bulge outward into a cone shape. The cone shape cornea leads to blurred vision and may cause sensitivity to light and glare and significant visual impairment.



What Causes keratoconus ?

The exact cause is not known , but several factors are believed to contribute to the condition:

- ✳ **Genetics:** Family history plays a significant role. If someone in your family has keratoconus, you are at a higher risk.
- ✳ **Environmental factors:** Chronic eye rubbing, which can cause mechanical trauma to the cornea, is thought to contribute to the development of keratoconus.
- ✳ **Connective tissue disorders:** People with certain conditions like Down syndrome, Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, and Marfan syndrome may be more likely to develop keratoconus.
- ✳ **Biochemical factors:** An imbalance in the enzymes that break down the corneal tissue may also play a role.

Symptoms of Keratoconus :

Keratoconus often begins in the late teens to early 20s and progresses over 10 to 20 years. It typically affects both eyes, but the severity can vary between them. Symptoms can change over time and may differ in each eye. Early-stage symptoms include:

- ✳ Mild blurring of vision
- ✳ Slightly distorted vision, where straight lines appear bent or wavy
- ✳ Increased sensitivity to light and glare, which can cause difficulties with night driving
- ✳ Eye redness or swelling

In later stages, keratoconus symptoms often include:

- ✳ More blurry and distorted vision
- ✳ Increased near-sightedness or astigmatism, which may require frequent changes in eyeglass prescriptions
- ✳ Difficulty wearing contact lenses due to improper fit and discomfort

Keratoconus usually progresses from early to late stages over several years. However, in some cases, it can worsen rapidly. The cornea may suddenly swell and develop scar tissue, leading to a loss of smoothness and clarity. As a result, vision becomes even more distorted and blurry.

Diagnosis of Keratoconus :

Diagnosing keratoconus requires a comprehensive eye exam. The following tests are commonly used:

- ✳ **Corneal topography:** This specialized scan maps the surface of the cornea, identifying its shape and thickness.
- ✳ **Pachymetry:** This test measures the thickness of the cornea.
- ✳ **Slit-lamp examination:** A detailed microscope examination of the cornea and the overall health of the eye.
- ✳ **Refraction test:** This test assesses how light is focused on the retina, helping to determine if there are refractive errors like astigmatism.

How is Keratoconus Treated ?



1. **Eyeglasses or contact lenses:** In the early stages, glasses or soft contact lenses can correct the vision. However, as the condition progresses, rigid or gas-permeable contact lenses may be needed to maintain vision quality.

Dr. Bhanu Boddi
Cornea Consultant

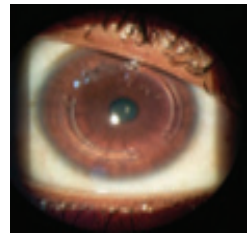


2. **Corneal cross-linking:** This procedure involves using ultraviolet (UV) light and riboflavin (vitamin B2)

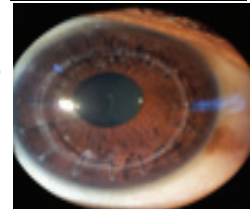


to strengthen the collagen fibers in the cornea, helping to halt the progression of keratoconus.

3. **Intacs (corneal inserts):** Small, crescent-shaped devices that are inserted into the cornea to help flatten its shape and improve vision.



4. **Corneal transplant (keratoplasty):** In advanced cases, where other treatments are ineffective, a corneal transplant may be necessary to replace the damaged cornea with a donor cornea.



With early intervention and proper treatment, individuals with keratoconus can maintain a high quality of life and manage their vision effectively. Regular eye exams are crucial for detecting the condition early and preventing significant visual impairment.

Do not rub your eyes! With keratoconus, try to avoid rubbing your eyes as it can damage the thin corneal tissue and worsen your symptoms. If you have itchy eyes that cause you to rub, speak to your ophthalmologist about medications to control your allergies.

Performance - January 2025

BASE HOSPITAL

☛ Total Eye Surgeries	1923
☛ Cataract Surgeries	1305
☛ Retina Surgeries	72
☛ Retina Injections	179
☛ Glaucoma Surgeries	23
☛ Cornea Surgeries	135
☛ Pediatric Surgeries	06
☛ Orbit & Oculoplasty	50
☛ Total OP Screened	13,563

BRANCHES

☛ Srikakulam -Eye Surgeries	245
☛ OP Screened	1444
☛ Maddilapalem -Surgeries	103
☛ OP Screened	1171
☛ Gajuwaka -Surgeries	18
☛ OP Screened	1036
☛ Madhurawada -Surgeries	13
☛ OP Screened	510
☛ Total 31 Outreach free eye camps conducted and screened 2282 patients and Performed 603 surgeries	

EDITOR - K Bangar Raju,
Dy GM (PR & Liaison)

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INTRIGUING INSIGHTS : UNVEILING FASCINATING FACTS ABOUT EYES

Your eyes are incredibly complex. They work hard from the minute you wake up to the minute you go back to sleep, constantly taking in information about the world around you.



✧ The human eye works just like a camera. In the same way that a camera lens focuses light onto a photosensitive surface, your eyes focus light onto the retina.



✧ Eyes first evolved around 500 million years ago. Scientists estimate that eye first evolved 500 million years ago, originally in a very simple form that could probably only distinguish light from dark.

✧ The most common eye colour in the world is brown. With over 55% of the world's population having brown eyes, it remains the most common colour. Eye colour is determined by genetics, because they dictate how much melanin is produced in your iris.

✧ A woman's eyesight can be affected by pregnancy. While hormones are raging and physical changes are occurring, it is possible for a woman to experience problems with her sight. These are usually minor and temporary conditions such as blurred vision and dry eyes, and will go away once the child is born.

✧ Human corneas are very similar to a sharks' cornea. This similarity means that sharks' eyes can be used as replacements in human eye surgeries.

✧ Smokers have almost double the chance of experiencing dry eye. Tobacco smoke is known to irritate eyes - even second hand exposure to the smoke can worsen dry eye, particularly for contact lens wearers.

✧ The sun's rays have been linked to eye damage. Several eye conditions, such as cataracts and pterygia, have been

associated with exposure to UV rays. To protect your eyes from the dangers of the sun, you should wear well fitted sunglasses, preferably a wraparound style.

✧ You should never share eye makeup with friends. Swapping your eye makeup can lead to nasty infections. This is because makeup applicators can easily carry bacteria and you don't want to trade germs with others.

✧ In space, an astronaut cannot cry. Due to the lack of gravity in space, tears do not fall. Instead they collect in little balls and make a person's eyes sting.

✧ You blink on average 4,200,000 times a year. The purpose of blinking is to lubricate the eyes. Adults blink around 15 - 20 times a minute, which researchers say is more than the required amount to keep the eyes moist.



✧ Around 99% of the world's population will first need reading glasses between the ages of 43 and 50. As we age, the lenses in our eyes slowly lose the ability to focus. This means that the vast majority of us will need some form of vision correction in our adult lives.

✧ Many of us have been brought up being told that carrots are the best food for eyesight, even that eating carrots will help us see in the dark. While the beta-carotene rich vegetable is a healthy addition to your diet, it does not have specific benefits for the eyes aside from vitamin A, which is converted from beta-carotene in the body, but there are much better sources of vitamin A.

✧ Dolphins Can Sleep with One Eye Open. Dogs Can't Distinguish Between Red and Green.

(Source: www.lenstore.co.uk: Inputs
K.Bangar Raju, Dy General Manager
(PR & Liaison)