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Building and Maintaining Strong Vision for Life

by Fred Liers

(NewsTarget) Building and maintaining excellent vision involves some basic steps anyone can follow. Even if you believe nothing can be done to help your vision, taking these simple steps can go far in preserving it, or even improving it.

Establishing core nutrition

The foundation of excellent vision is proper nutrition. A healthy diet is in many ways the most important factor in building, supporting, maintaining, and also improving vision. While there is no single diet that is best for everyone, experts agree that a healthy diet high in vegetables is essential for eye health. Choose to make every meal an opportunity for enjoying more vegetables (preferably organic). Steam, stir fry, or simply eat them raw.

Eat plenty of dark, green leafy vegetables like spinach, kale, collards and chard. Beyond dark greens, go for colored vegetables, including carrots (orange), squash (yellow), beets (red), and red cabbage (purple). Colors indicate phytonutrients, many of which are antioxidants and eye-specific nutrients capable of providing super nutrition for your eyes. Fruits can help vision, too. Select dark fruits that are high in antioxidants like blueberries and blackberries, as well as dried fruits like raisins and prunes.

Core supplements

A primary element in establishing core nutrition is ensuring adequate intake of essential nutrients. One of the best ways to ensure your nutrient foundation is taking a series of core nutritional supplement formulas. Core supplements include: 1) a high-quality **multivitamin**, 2) a **vitamin C** formula and 3) an **essential fats** formula. These three basic formulas are the first supplements you should take, even if you take no others. Taking them regularly can significantly boost your level of health.

You can find core supplements at your local health food store. **Integrated Health** helped pioneer the concept of core nutrition, and they have formulated a superb trio of core supplements, including **Multi Two**, **PRO-C**, and **Omega Plus**. They offer a special package price on all three formulas at: <http://www.integratedhealth.com/core-formulas.html>

Later, after establishing your regimen of core formulas, then you can add additional formulas, including herbs, single nutrients, and specific-condition formulas (e.g., a vision formula, diabetes formula, or antioxidant formula) that meet your individual needs.

Drink carrot juice and fresh organic vegetable juices

You likely have heard that carrot juice is a tonic for the eyes. Indeed, carrot juice works extremely well for this purpose, partly by providing large amounts of provitamin-A beta-carotene. Get a quality juicer and make at least 16 oz of juice every day. If you can't make it yourself, then find a good juice bar.

While you're making carrot juice (or having it made for you), why not add some beets, parsley greens, spinach leaves, celery stalks, or cucumber pieces into the mix? Fresh vegetable juices truly are the #1 way to improve vision.

Juicers are available in a diverse array of types and models. Look at them all. There is likely one in your price range. Considering the enormous benefits, a good juicer can be a priceless tool in the quest for better vision.

Vegetable juices are excellent for hydrating your body, but also remember to drink plenty of fresh, pure water.

Take antioxidant nutrients

Antioxidants include vitamin A, vitamin C, and vitamin E. Other antioxidants needed for ocular health include beta-carotene, alpha-carotene, lycopene, and other carotenoids, such as lutein and zeaxanthin. Although multivitamins and other core formulas provide antioxidants, it is a good idea to add a specific antioxidant formula, mixed carotenoids formula, or a vision formula that can provide higher levels of these nutrients for optimal eye health.

In September, a well-publicized six-year study conducted by the National Eye Institute (NEI) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) concluded that carotenoids, including lutein and zeaxanthin are highly effective at preventing free-radical damage in eye cells and strengthening eye cell membranes (*Archives of Ophthalmology* 125: 1225-32, Sept. 2007). The researchers found that lutein and zeaxanthin protect the eye by absorbing blue light that can damage the macula.

NEI's study confirms what many studies have previously concluded: antioxidant carotenoids powerfully protect and support eye health.

Superfoods for stronger vision

For boosting core nutrition that supports excellent vision, the best foods are superfoods. Superfoods include chlorella, spirulina, nutritional yeast, chia seeds, and other foods. Superfoods provide greater quantities of nutrients than are typically found in foods. For example, chlorella provides a large amount of chlorophyll, but also offers essential fats, nucleic acids (DNA and RNA), and vitamins.

A mixed superfood such as **Rejuvenate!** provides you with many superfoods, including chlorella, spirulina, nutritional yeast, and chia seeds. This synergistic blend of superfoods represents the future of nutrition, and is available at: <http://www.integratedhealth.com/hpdspec/rejuvenate.html>

Superfoods for high levels of dietary nucleic acids

Besides being dense in nutrients, one of the main reasons superfoods (especially chlorella, chlorella growth factor (CGF), and nutritional yeast) provide so much nutrition is because they contain high levels of dietary nucleic acids. Dietary nucleic acids include RNA, DNA, as well as subcomponent nucleotides and nucleosides.

Foods abundant in nucleic acids offer a unique capability for boosting the production of the energy molecule ATP (adenosine triphosphate) in the body. Nucleic acids from foods have been shown to improve energy levels, endurance, functional strength, tissue oxygenation and aerobic capacity, skin tone, and to provide many other positive benefits.

When the body abundantly produces ATP, there is energy available to carry out your genetic blueprint more accurately. This also means better intracellular communication for improved cell function, and for stimulating processes of healing, regeneration, and rejuvenation.

Dietary nucleic acids actually are so important that molecular biologist Dr. Benjamin S. Frank asserts (in *Nucleic Acid Nutrition and Therapy*) that nucleic acids are essential nutrients, just like vitamins and minerals. According to Dr. Frank, simply by consuming foods high in nucleic acids, we can live longer, feel better, and become younger.

The connection between improved energy (ATP) production and eye health relates to the fact that nutrients capable of supporting and regenerating tissues throughout the body can also rejuvenate eyes. When higher levels of energy produced at the cellular level (i.e., resulting from higher intakes of nucleic acids) are combined with core nutrients and antioxidants, powerful health is created for all organ systems, including eyes.

Your natural foods and supplements program will yield greater benefits for your eyes when you consume superfoods high in nucleic acids, which offer unique capacities for building health.

Reduce dietary sugars

At the same time you're increasing your intake of antioxidants, superfoods, and dietary nucleic acids, you will greatly benefit from reducing sugars in your diet, especially refined sugars. Sugars not only deplete nutrients in your body, but also contribute to the cross-linking of collagen fibers in your eye, and to aging in eyes through a biochemical process of glycation.

The result of sugar-induced glycation processes is the creation of Advanced Glycation Endproducts (AGEs), which have been implicated both in aging and age-related chronic diseases. In addition, sugars disturb blood sugar levels, which can complicate or further contribute to eye troubles.

Dr. Linus Pauling recommends that individuals reduce their sugar intake at least by half. Shockingly, the average American consumes over 100 pounds of sugar per year. At this intake level, sugars account for approximately 20 percent of all food energy consumed. Reducing or eliminating simple sugars in your diet remains among the most effective ways to improve eye health and the health of other tissues subject to destructive glycation processes.

For a clear discussion of the effects of simple sugars on health, suggestions for reducing dietary sugars, and explanations of the biochemistry behind the major roles nutritional supplements play in improving and prolonging our lives, see Dr. Pauling's *How To Live Longer and Feel Better*.

Consume adequate amounts of essential fats

Eyes need protection afforded by essential fatty acids. Eye tissues can become dry or inflamed when they lack these fats. A core essential fats formula (see above) is important for eye health, but it is a good idea to consume additional essential fats in your diet.

Chia seeds contain an abundance of essential fats, and they also supply antioxidants. There are plenty of other sources for essential fatty acids, including nuts (e.g., walnuts) and seeds, chlorella, as well as fish and fish oils.

Try an herbal eyewash formula

For dry, irritated eyes, or eye troubles related to less than optimal circulation, try an herbal formula. Herbalists long have recommended specific herbal tinctures for eyes. For example, cayenne can powerfully boost circulation, allowing nutrients into cells and flushing out impurities.

Herbal tinctures can be taken orally, but they also can be used in very dilute form in the eyes (e.g., 2-10 drops in 1 oz distilled water).

Herbal eye tinctures may contain eyebright flower, goldenseal root, mullein flower, fennel seed, cayenne, and other eye-supportive herbs. You can tincture such herbs yourself in your kitchen, or purchase them at health food stores. A widely-used herbal eyewash is Dr. Richard Schulze's

Eyebright Formula, which is available from the **American Botanical Pharmacy**:

<http://www.herbdoc.com>

Don't underestimate the potential effectiveness of herbal tinctures for helping your vision. You can begin with just one drop mixed into an eyecup filled with distilled water. Regular, diligent use typically produces better results.

N-Acetyl-Carnosine Eye Drops

Consider trying an eye drop solution containing **N-Acetyl-Carnosine** (NAC). One useful formula is **Visual Ocuity** lubricant eye drops, which contain 1% NAC. N-Acetyl-Carnosine is a timed-release form of the naturally occurring dipeptide L-Carnosine. L-Carnosine is a proven antioxidant and antiglycating nutrient. NAC eye drops are the form that best supports eye health, while oral L-Carnosine (e.g., capsules) provides antioxidant protection for the body.

Numerous studies, including many conducted by a leading Russian NAC researcher Dr. Mark Babizhayev, show the unique effects of eye drop solutions containing NAC for helping to protect and support eyes. According to Dr. Babizhayev, eye drops containing 1% N-Acetyl-Carnosine are uniquely effective for helping to improve or dissolve cataracts. Individuals having dry eye and other conditions also have reported benefits from eye drop solutions containing NAC.

Dr. Julian Whitaker recommends **Visual Ocuity** eye drops from **Integrated Health**:
<http://www.integratedhealth.com/hpdspec/naturaleyedrops.html>

Dr. Whitaker recommends **Visual Ocuity** for individuals experiencing eye difficulties specifically relating to processes of glycation, including cataracts.

Take off your glasses

Natural light is essential for eye and brain health. Sunlight exposure through the eye is known to help set circadian rhythms, and also balances certain hormones (e.g., melatonin) required for proper brain function.

Take off your glasses for 10-30 minutes per day, preferably in natural, indirect light. Even if you don't wear glasses, go outside and enjoy some natural light and fresh air. Allow your eyes naturally to focus on more distant objects. Or allow them to defocus, especially if they are tired or overworked. After you've gotten some exposure to natural light, you might gently massage your eyes.

Tight neck muscles greatly contribute to eyestrain and subsequent eye problems. Receive a chair or table massage from a qualified massage therapist, and see if this makes a difference for you.

Natural eye improvement books and DVDs are readily available. These often provide useful, proven exercises you can do in the comfort of your own home. Among others, one worthy program is Meir Schneider's *Yoga for Your Eyes*.

Breathe deeply and relax

While you're following these steps for building eye health, take some time to breathe more deeply. Oxygen is the stuff of life. Oxygenated tissues have greater vitality. So if you're out getting some natural light in your eyes, and drinking carrot juice...you might take a walk and consciously breathe a little more deeply.

Ancient yogis knew well the benefits of breathing exercises and developed an entire practice (pranayama) around it. Whether or not you already practice yoga or meditation, you might set aside 8-20 minutes (or more) per day for breathing practice and deep relaxation.

Try reading Dr. Herbert Benson's *The Relaxation Response*, Victor Davich's *8 Minute Meditation*, or B.K.S. Iyengar's *Light on Pranayama*.

Make the power of synergy work for you

Any one of these steps can strengthen your eyes. The synergy created by combining these steps can powerfully contribute to strengthening your eyes. Continuing these steps can secure the foundation for stronger vision that lasts a lifetime.

About the author

Dr. Fred Liers has a strong personal commitment to natural health and healing. Fred has been on 20-year mission of self-education after realizing that conventional modalities and mainstream nutrition were not viable options for himself or his family. After years spent learning about and implementing natural healing therapies, Fred shares his knowledge in helping others to find health and wellness. He formerly taught literature and writing composition at UCLA and University of Arizona, but now devotes his efforts toward health education. He also writes for the family business, Health Products Distributors, Inc. (HPDI): www.IntegratedHealth.com.

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