

How an Eye Exam at Eyemart Express Can Uncover Hidden Heart Health Issues

This Healthy Vision Month, schedule an eye exam with one of Eyemart Express' optometrists to keep your eyes and heart healthy in one appointment

May 02, 2023

In honor of Healthy Vision Month, please see this special message from our friends and VFW member benefit provider, Eyemart Express.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In fact, one person dies from heart disease every 34 seconds. However, most people don't know that an eye exam can give you a heart health checkup. That is why optometrists from [Eyemart Express](#), the VFW's exclusive eye care provider known for helping people see clearly faster, are educating consumers about this simple way to uncover hidden heart health issues.

In addition to evaluating your eye health and vision, annual comprehensive eye exams can provide medical insights about the heart such as high cholesterol, which contributes to heart disease and an increased risk of heart attacks and even diabetes.

"The eyes provide a window into your overall health," says Dr. Mike Balgemann, an optometrist at Eyemart Express in Champaign, Illinois. "We can alert you to any signs that set off alarm bells regarding your heart."

Dr. Balgemann shares the top hidden signs for heart health that eye doctors can pick up on during an eye exam:

1. Blood vessels inside the eye change size — narrowing or ballooning — from the stress of high blood pressure and heart disease.
2. Blocked blood vessels in the eyes can cause loss of sight and reveal the increased risk of

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a stroke.

3. Leaks and bleeds from weak blood vessels in the retina can be indicators of high blood pressure and diabetes.
4. Signs of high cholesterol, which increases the risk for cardiovascular disease.

“There have been several occasions when I have instructed a patient to go to the emergency room right away because of life-threatening signs revealed by their eye exam,” says Dr. Balgemann.

Schedule an eye exam with one of Eyemart Express’ optometrists to keep your eyes and heart healthy in one appointment. Eyemart Express gives all VFW members and their families a 20% discount on all purchases, including frames, lenses, and accessories, with a valid VFW membership card. The optical retailer also offers the flexible payment options for those who want to wear their new same-day glasses home and pay-over-time. Find your [local Eyemart Express store here](#).