Optometrists, Ophthalmologists & Opticians

What you need to know about them and your eye care

Effective April 1, 2017 Local 1262’s vision care services for our ShopRite and Stop & Shop members will be provided by Horizon Vision powered by Davis Vision. To assist our members with this transition, we have prepared the following overview about the different types of eye care.

Switching to Horizon Vision brings with it new and improved vision care benefits, including frame replacement every 12 months versus 24 months, an increased contact lens allowance and many others improvements. Local 1262 members who are eligible for vision care will receive their new Horizon Vision ID cards this month.

In the meantime, if you would like to review the list of vision care providers available to you, log on to www.davisvision.com and enter client code 3156. You can also call Horizon Vision at 1-800-278-7753.

What is the difference between the two types of eye doctors?

There are two main types of eye doctors: ophthalmologists and optometrists. Both perform routine eye exams and both are trained to detect, diagnose and manage eye diseases that require medical and non-medical treatment.

One type isn't automatically better than the other. The right choice depends on your needs and should be appropriate to your vision problems. If you need routine eyeglass/contact lens care, you generally will choose an optometrist. If you have a specific medical eye condition, you may want to choose an ophthalmologist.

Here's a quick look at how the two are different — although they sometimes work together to ensure your complete eye health.

Ophthalmologist

They went to medical school and served a one-year internship and a residency of three or more years. They offer complete eye care services including:

- Medical eye care -- for conditions like glaucoma, iritis, and chemical burns
- Surgical eye care -- for trauma, crossed eyes, cataracts, glaucoma, and other problems
- Diagnosis and treatment of eye conditions related to other diseases, like diabetes or arthritis
- Vision services, including eye exams

In general, you would visit an ophthalmologist for a “medical reason”.
Optometrist

They’re medical professionals who, after college, spent four years in a professional program and got a doctor of optometry degree. They focus on regular vision care and prescribe eyeglasses and contacts. They also:

- Perform eye exams
- Treat conditions like nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism
- Prescribe and fit eyeglasses and contact lenses
- Provide low-vision aids and vision therapy
- Diagnose eye conditions like glaucoma, cataracts, macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and conjunctivitis
- Prescribe medications for certain eye conditions (in some states)
- Help with pre- or post-operative care for people who need surgery

In general, you visit an optometrist for routine “non-medical” care.

Opticians

Opticians work with both optometrists and ophthalmologists. They can’t give eye exams but they fill the prescription your eye doctor gives to you. Opticians also:

- Provide, adjust, and repair glasses, frames, and contact lenses
- Take facial measurements
- Help decide which type of lenses and frames will work best
- Order and check products, including contacts and eyeglass lenses
- Check lens prescriptions

For more information on your new coverage, please click the link below (copy of the mailer).

You can also call our Health & Welfare Fund at 1-800-522-4161, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.