

## WHEN YOU'RE CHOOSING SUNGLASSES, DOES UV PROTECTION MATTER?

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**This month is a reminder to choose function over fashion when purchasing your next pair of sunglasses.**

Yes, ultraviolet (UV) eye protection matters. UV radiation from the sun can damage not only the skin of your eyelid but also the cornea, lens and other parts of the eye. UV exposure also contributes to the development of certain types of cataracts, growths on the eye and possibly macular degeneration.

To protect your eyes, look for sunglasses that:

- Block 99 to 100 percent of both UVA and UVB rays
- Screen out 75 to 90 percent of visible light
- Have lenses that are perfectly matched in color and free of distortions and imperfections
- Have lenses that are gray for proper color recognition

The color and degree of darkness sunglasses provide have nothing to do with the sunglasses' ability to block UV rays. Also, opt for wraparound sunglasses or close-fitting sunglasses with wide lenses that protect your eyes from every angle. Some contact lenses also offer UV protection, but should be worn in combination with sunglasses to maximize protection.

**Source:** Cheryl Khanna, M.D., Mayo Clinic