



## Healthy Bites Episode 19 – Looking after our eyes

Hi, I'm Dr Nick, an optometrist from Eyes by Design.

Annually falls are reported by over one-third of all people aged over 65. Many people dismiss falls as minor, but the impact of a serious fall can be devastating. Even minor falls or near misses can place an unexpected emotional, physical, and financial burden on families, limiting movement, reducing activity, and significantly diminishing a person's quality of life.

But did you know that reduced vision is a leading cause of falls? Whilst our eyes change as a natural part of ageing, we can work with an optometrist to put a few simple strategies in place to care for our eyes and therefore keep ourselves safe on our feet for as long as possible.

For example, most vision-related falls are associated with what we call refractive error. This means that the eyes are unable to focus light correctly onto the retina at the back of the eye. However, an optometrist can provide glasses or upgrade inappropriate glasses to improve your vision so you can see trip hazards and contrast more clearly, and therefore keep yourself safer.

Regular assessments by an optometrist can lead to diagnosis and treatment of a range of different eye diseases. Getting early assessments as soon as you notice changes in vision, such as blur, cloudiness, dim or double vision can enable timely diagnosis and early treatment, which is essential in preventing irreversible vision loss.

Some conditions such as glaucoma can cause you to lose your sight without you seeing any symptoms.

So, don't put off your annual eye examinations or getting advice for any changes you notice to your eyes, as your sight, independence, and even your life could depend on it!