



## Healthy Bites Episode 22 – Contrast

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

Did you know that our ability to see contrast declines with age? Unfortunately, this can mean we fail to see potential hazards as easily as when we were younger, and for some people this can lead to a trip and then a fall.

However, in your home you can increase the contrast between your walls and floors, and avoid using similar colours or patterns in the same room. You can also install grab bars in the bathroom that contrast with the wall colour and use contrasting non-slip mats as further prevention.

Also, when you're out and about, try to slow down and look a couple of metres ahead, so you can be on the lookout for changes in lighting or surface patterns that could affect your ability to see contrast. For example, a curb painted the same colour as the street may be harder to distinguish and increase the risk of tripping. And when crossing a street, look for zebra crossings or other markings that provide high-contrast visual cues.

If you or someone you know has reduced contrast sensitivity, scheduling regular eye examinations with an optometrist is really important. They can help identify the cause of the problem and recommend appropriate treatments, such as wearing glasses or increasing lighting in certain areas, to keep you upright and safe on your feet.