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**Protecting Eyes from Ultraviolet (UV) Rays Today Helps to Save
Healthy Vision in the Future**

***Prevent Blindness Declares May as UV Awareness Month to Educate Public
About Harmful Effects of UV on Eyes***

CHICAGO (April 29, 2019) – Ultraviolet rays pose a danger to more than just your skin. In fact, cumulative UV damage has been linked to the development of macular degeneration, cataract and cancer. It can also cause immediate injury, such as a corneal sunburn (photokeratitis) that occurs from extended exposure to rays reflected off water, snow or concrete.

[Prevent Blindness](#), the nation's oldest eye health and safety organization, has declared May as Ultraviolet (UV) Awareness Month to help educate the public on the dangers of UV exposure as well as provide information on the best ways to protect vision. An eye care professional can offer recommendations on the best types of sunglasses for everyone in the family, including those that may need prescription lenses.

Everyone should wear a brimmed hat and sunglasses to protect the eyes when outdoors. Always choose sunglasses that:

- reduce glare
- filter out 100% of UV rays
- protect your eyes
- are comfortable to wear
- do not distort colors.

According to the [American Academy of Ophthalmology](#), polarized lenses cut reflected glare, (sunlight that bounces off smooth surfaces like pavement, car windows, chromed surfaces or water). However, polarization has nothing to do with UV light absorption, but many polarized lenses are now combined with a UV-blocking substance. The group advises to check the label to make sure the lenses provide maximum UV protection.

Prevent Blindness also recommends consulting with an eye care professional on eye protection that both blocks UV as well as protects eyes from injury. Eye protection

glasses and goggles with UV coating may be found for almost any sport or outdoor activity, including yard work, etc.

“As the weather starts to warm and we spend more time outdoors, it’s important to remember never to leave the house without UV protection for the eyes,” said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “Consistently protecting our eyes today can help save sight in the future.”

For more information on the dangers of UV exposure and how to choose the best UV protection, please visit the Prevent Blindness dedicated Web page at <http://www.preventblindness.org/protect-your-eyes-sun> or call (800) 331-2020.

About Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-800-331-2020. Or, visit us on the Web at preventblindness.org or facebook.com/preventblindness.

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