



IMPORTANT NEWS: Alberta Health cuts funding for eye care services

Significant Changes to Eye Care Coverage

Effective Feb 1, 2025, the Alberta Government will reduce or eliminate funding for many optometric services.

Coverage has been eliminated for some services, and reduced by as much as 32% from 2017 levels for others.

These cuts will affect seniors, children and include but are not limited to patients with Macular Degeneration, Glaucoma, Diabetes and many other eye diseases. Optometrists have not received any funding increase from the government since 2017, despite cumulative inflation of over 21% during this period.

We have tried our best to control costs and subsidize low reimbursement levels to allow everyone to have access to quality eye care. However, with reduced funding for testing, imaging and the elimination of previously funded services, it is no longer sustainable to provide eye care services at no cost to our patients.

How these funding cuts may affect you:

We believe strongly in providing the same high level of care to our patients as we would want for ourselves and our families. We continue to reinvest in the latest technology to prevent, monitor and treat eye conditions at the highest standards of care.

Unfortunately, along with most optometry clinics in Alberta, we have been faced with the difficult decision to institute patient co-pays for some services. We have tried to keep these fees as low as possible in order to cover increasing staff, overhead and technology costs. We will do our best to inform you of fees in advance so you can prepare for your visit with us.

- Co-pay of \$25 for previously funded services. This includes:
 - Routine annual exams for children 2 and up.
 - Medical visits for any reason, including red eyes, pain, sudden vision changes, partial visits, post-operative care and pre-operative consultations.
 - Visual field testing for glaucoma and other diseases
- Co-pay of \$45 for a routine annual eye exam for seniors 65 and up
- We will continue to subsidize visits for children under the age of 2 at no added cost. We believe strongly in removing any barriers to a child's access to eye care.

Please understand that we are just as frustrated and disappointed in these changes as you are. We encourage you to contact your MLA to discuss these changes as they are unfortunately beyond our control. We appreciate your understanding and hope that you continue to see value in preventative eye care to take care of your most precious sense.

Respectfully,
The Doctors and Team at Fort Saskatchewan Eyecare