

September 2009

Press release

## **A sight for soy eyes**

*National survey reveals healthy sight can be found in every bite*

While the majority of South Africans (99%) know that carrots, spinach and salmon are good for their eyes, the Transitions Healthy Sight Survey<sup>1</sup> has revealed that less than half (four out of 10) of respondents were aware that unhealthy eating habits can damage your eyes and exacerbate eye-related diseases such as diabetes and glaucoma.

Survey results, which were released to coincide with World Sight Day (8 October 2009), also revealed that almost a third of respondents believe that caffeine consumption is an unhealthy habit that causes damage to the eyes. While the damaging effects of caffeine on the eyes has not yet been confirmed, more concerning is that only half (52%) of respondents admitted to visiting an optometrist less than once a year and a mere three out of 10 respondents stated that they would only visit an optometrist when they have visual problems. However, according to Richard Pearson, Country Manager Transitions Optical South Africa, visiting an optometrist is about more than just an eye test: "Systemic diseases such as diabetes and glaucoma can be easily detected by means of an eye test."

Choosing sight over sex, the survey also revealed that eight out of 10 South Africans value their sight more than any other sense including their libido, which was only given merit by 11% of the respondents. According to Dr Nicky Welsh, ophthalmologist at Wits Donald Gordon Medical Centre, it may be worthwhile for the remaining 89% to note that four oysters are known to boost your libido. "Oysters, commonly referred to as 'kings of zinc', contain on average 100 times more zinc than any other marine animal," says Dr Welsh. "Zinc is an essential component of many enzymes, including those producing light-sensing retinal from vitamin A. Without zinc, beta-carotene (found in carrots) cannot prevent night blindness and other adverse effects of vitamin A deficiency<sup>2</sup>."

"'Eye food' can be found in many types of fresh fruit, vegetables, nuts, legumes, seeds and seafood. Soy beans, flaxseeds and salmon are crammed with anti-oxidants, carotenoids, minerals and vitamins," adds Dr Welsh. "What few consumers realise is that there is an abundance of food on supermarket shelves bursting with essential nutrients; all beneficial for the eyes."

On a positive note, the results revealed that South Africans have increased their knowledge and awareness of the irreversible damage extended exposure to UV rays can cause; 90% are aware compared to only 15% in last year's survey.

Pearson concludes: "Wearing corrective spectacle lenses could help reverse ones lens prescription over time<sup>3</sup> and protecting the eyes from harmful UV rays can help reduce the onset of age-related macular degeneration (AMD)."

*Transitions lenses® with Advanced Performance*, variable-tint lenses which are clear indoors and become sun lens dark when exposed to UV light, block 100% UV rays from reaching the eyes and reduce glare and reflection. The lenses can also be fitted to any designer frame making them a fashion must-have.

Don't be blind to the facts. Protect your body from the inside out for a brighter, healthier future.

Log on to [www.transitions.co.za](http://www.transitions.co.za) for more information on eye health and eye care.

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Issued and prepared by liquidlingo Communications for Transitions Optical.

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### **Notes to the Editor**

- *Transitions® lenses with Advanced Performance*, the #1-recommended variable tint lenses worldwide, are a convenient and carefree way to enjoy healthy sight by protecting the eyes from glare and harmful UV rays, helping to improve the quality of your vision and the long-term health and well-being of your eyes. Indoors, outdoors, day or night; at work, play and everywhere in between, *Transitions® lenses with Advanced Performance* are convenient everyday lenses to help maintain and preserve your healthy sight.
- **Clarity & quick adjustment:** *Transitions® lenses with Advanced Performance* are as clear as regular clear lenses indoors and at night. They provide optimal clarity and indoor vision. *Transitions® lenses with Advanced Performance* activate and fade back very quickly.
- **Glare reduction improves the quality of your vision:** *Transitions® lenses with Advanced Performance* reduce glare, thus enhancing the quality of your vision and providing greater comfort. When you go outdoors, *Transitions® lenses with Advanced Performance* automatically darken in sunlight to reduce glare and quickly adjust their tint to changing light conditions. Glare can cause squinting, eye strain and eye fatigue. Glare can also cause blurred vision and visual discomfort. In daylight, glare can occur when walking indoors to outdoors, moving from shade to sunlight, or with light reflected off of surfaces like cars or pavements. Hence, *Transitions® lenses with Advanced Performance* help to see better every day and enjoy great vision.
- **UV protection helps to maintain healthy sight on the long term:** Like sun block protects your skin, *Transitions® lenses with Advanced Performance* also help take care of your sight for the future by continuously blocking 100% of UVA and UVB rays, helping to preserve the health and well-being of your eyes. UV rays are present all year round; even on cloudy days. Research indicates that the damage occurring over time from prolonged exposure to harmful UVA and UVB rays (damage from UV exposure is cumulative, building each and every time your eyes are exposed to the sun) may contribute to short-term vision impairment and potentially serious age-related conditions or diseases of the eye, including some type of cataracts and macular degeneration.

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1. The Transitions Optical Healthy Sight Survey was conducted by world-renowned market research company Ipsos-Markinor in March 2009. One thousand South African respondents partook in the survey.

2. Rhone, M. & Basu, A. Phytochemicals and age-related eye diseases. *Nutr Rev* **66**, 465-472 (2008).
3. Results may vary from one individual to another.