



## Ordering Eyeglasses Online the Safe, Smart Way

You can buy practically anything online—and eyeglasses are no exception. With a prescription in hand and a few simple clicks, you'll enjoy the convenience of having your new eyewear delivered straight to your doorstep.

The convenience of shopping online is unmatched. But when you're buying health care goods on the internet—particularly those that affect your vision—taking a closer look at the process will help illuminate some lurking pitfalls.

So, before you make your next eyewear purchase online, consider these facts and tips to protect the health of your eyes and your wallet.

### Are You Getting What You Paid for?

If you purchase glasses online as opposed to through your local eye doctor, one of the risks is that the prescription you provide may not be included in your purchase.

According to findings from a 2011 study published by the American Optometric Association, Optical Laboratories Association and The Vision Council, ordering eyewear online is far from flawless. The study's researchers asked 10 people to order two pairs of eyeglasses (adult and child lenses) from a variety of online eyewear retailers. Of the 200 ordered pairs, only 154 were received. And of those received pairs:

- Nearly half (44.8 percent) had wrong prescriptions or safety issues.
- A quarter of children's lenses and nearly 20 percent of adult lenses failed impact resistance testing.

If you're concerned the eyeglasses you purchased online are not the proper prescription, talk to your eye doctor.

When ordering online, ask yourself whether you are certain you're ordering a high-quality product that includes your prescription. If you're unable to determine the manufacturer of your lenses, whether they meet standards for impact resistance or if the website is a legitimate optical retailer, it's best to avoid purchasing from that site.

Buying your lenses from your optician will ensure your lenses meet all federal standards, have the proper prescription and are not counterfeit.

## Try Before You Buy

When it comes to buying eyeglasses, looks matter. And that's a big challenge when it comes to ordering eyeglasses online.

Glasses come in an array of different shapes and materials, and it's hard to know what will work best for you until you wear them.

While some sites offer virtual try on (where you upload a photo of yourself and see the frames on your face), the best option is to try on the physical pair of glasses before buying. Many online optical retailers will ship sample pairs to you at little or no cost, so you can feel and see the frames in person.

It may delay you receiving your new eyewear by a few weeks, but trying on at home before you buy will boost confidence in your purchase and minimize buyer's remorse.

### **The Nitty Gritty: Achieving Convenience and Value While Ordering Online**

If you're planning to buy eyeglasses online, you'll be able to take your pick from seemingly countless online retailers. These retailers vary widely in terms of their policies, so taking a closer look will help you get the best product at the best cost.

- ***What is included in the eyewear cost?*** Does the price only include the lenses? Or do you receive a case, protective cloth and any other extras?
- ***Who pays for shipping?*** And how long will it take to receive your glasses?
- ***What's the return policy?*** What financial obligation do you have if you aren't happy with your purchase? Will you have to pay for return shipping?
- ***Are your eyeglasses protected by a warranty?*** What warranty protection is offered—and for how long? Will you have to purchase a warranty, or is one included in the cost?
- ***Will my vision insurance cover my online purchase?*** Not all online retailers accept vision insurance. If you have DeltaVision coverage through Delta Dental, you have access to online in-network retailers, so you can make sure to get the best price for your purchase.

### **You Should Still See Your Eye Doctor**

Once your eyewear is delivered, it's not the end of the process. Just because you didn't purchase your eyewear from your eye clinic does not mean you shouldn't feel comfortable asking your doctor to help fit your new glasses. Remember, your eye doctor acts in the best interest of your vision health.

Your local eye care team can help fit your glasses to your face, ensuring they help you see clearly and comfortably. This step is important: Poor-fitting frames aren't just annoying, they can actually harm your vision.

The convenience of online shopping has made life easier, but eyeglass purchases should be made with extra care and consideration. Take some time to analyze the online retailer and keep your local eye care team involved to ensure your new purchase helps you see clearly and comfortably.

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# A Quick Guide to Oral Cancer Warning Signs and Risk Factors

Approximately 50,000 Americans will be diagnosed with oral cancer this year—and, sadly, the disease carries a high death rate because early signs and symptoms are often missed.

Knowing these critical signs and symptoms—along with the risk factors that up your chances for developing the disease—will not only increase the chances of finding oral cancer early but also your treatment success.

**Visiting your dentist twice yearly is your best source of oral cancer early detection**, but knowing the facts below will arm you with the knowledge to identify the disease as early as possible.

## Are You at a Heightened Risk of Developing Oral Cancer?

If you have the risk factors below, it means you have a higher risk of developing oral cancer than the general public. However, you can still develop oral cancer without having any risk factors.

- **Tobacco and heavy alcohol use:** The two biggest risk factors for developing oral cancer; if you use tobacco and are a heavy drinker, your risk spikes even more.
- **Male gender:** Men are twice as likely to develop the disease as women.
- **Human papillomavirus (HPV):** HPV infections are increasingly linked to oral cancers.
- **Poor diet:** Diets low in fruits and vegetables may make you more susceptible to oral cancer.
- **Weak immune system:** If you have a disease or take a medication that weakens your immune system, you may be at a higher risk of developing oral cancer.

## Know the Red Flags: Oral Cancer Signs and Symptoms

The most common sign of oral cancer is a sore inside of your mouth that doesn't go away. But there are many other indications of the disease that you shouldn't ignore.

If you notice any of the common oral cancer symptoms below, don't hesitate to call your dentist:

- **Mouth pain that doesn't go away**
- **A lump in your cheek or neck**
- **Throat problems:** Difficulty swallowing, sore throat or persistent throat discomfort
- **Jaw and tongue problems:** Difficulty moving your tongue or jaw as normal, tongue numbness, jaw pain and/or a swollen jaw
- **Areas of white or red on the inside of the mouth, gums and/or tongue**

## Why is It Important to Learn about Oral Cancer?

Although your dentist will screen for oral cancer during your twice-yearly dental visits (a screening usually involves your dentist taking a close look inside your mouth and feeling for lesions), knowing your risk and the signs for oral cancer will help catch a possible problem between those visits.

Like most cancers, the earlier you detect oral cancer, the more likely you are to respond to treatment and experience a full recovery.



If you have questions or concerns about your risk for oral cancer or signs of the disease, your dentist is your best resource. He or she can explain your specific risks and even walk through the screening process as it's performed.

Knowing the risk factors and red flag signs makes you an informed patient—and that's one of the best things you can do proactively to protect your oral and overall health.

### **Sources**

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