



# START WITH EYE

PUBLIC AWARENESS TOOLKIT



For questions regarding the 'Start with Eye' campaign, contact [2020EyeExam@AOA.org](mailto:2020EyeExam@AOA.org)

# TIMELINE

## Q1 2020

### **MARCH: SAVE YOUR VISION MONTH / START WITH EYE OFFICIAL KICK-OFF**

- AOA to share 'Start With Eye' communications toolkit for outreach focused on making 2020 the year of the eye exam
- Distribute press release and pitch to local media outlets announcing launch of 'Start With Eye' 2020 public awareness campaign
- Customize and share promotional tools throughout the month
- Month-long Lyft activation offering free rides to patients visiting an optometrist kicks off in 10 U.S. cities (Charleston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Indianapolis, Memphis, Miami, New York, St. Louis, and Seattle). Discount promotion only available for a limited time while supplies last.

## Q3 2020

- **JUNE 24-28: OPTOMETRY'S MEETING 2020**
  - ▶ Highlight select employers participating in pledge
  - ▶ Recognize doctors and affiliates who enlist the most employers
  - ▶ Celebrate 2020 at the Nation's Capital
- **WEEK OF JUNE 15:** Affiliates to receive supplemental public-facing materials and resources
  - ▶ Patient-facing content
    - Back-to-school (July)
    - Contact Lens Health Week (August)
    - Aging vision (September)

## Q2 2020

- **WEEK OF APRIL 6:** Affiliates to receive additional public-facing materials and resources
  - ▶ Patient-facing content
    - Sports vision (April)
    - Protecting eyes at work (May)
    - UV protection (June)

## Q4 2020

- **WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 21:** Affiliates to receive additional public-facing materials and resources
  - ▶ Patient-facing content
    - Decorative lenses (October)
    - National Diabetes Month (November)
    - Utilizing flexible spending accounts (December)



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# CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

Thank you for partnering with the American Optometric Association (AOA) to make 2020 *the year* of the eye exam! We are thrilled to have affiliates nationwide help putting optometry's message at the forefront of national conversation.

Building on the #2020EyeExam Communications Guide, the AOA has developed a new toolkit to bring to life the 'Start With Eye' campaign in your state. Within this kit, you will find a number of customizable, creative materials to add to your 2020 public relations and communications efforts during the month of March, including member newsletter content, template press release, social media posts and more! AOA encourages affiliates to use the 'Start With Eye' materials alongside the initial #2020EyeExam promotional tools to further engage the public in 2020.

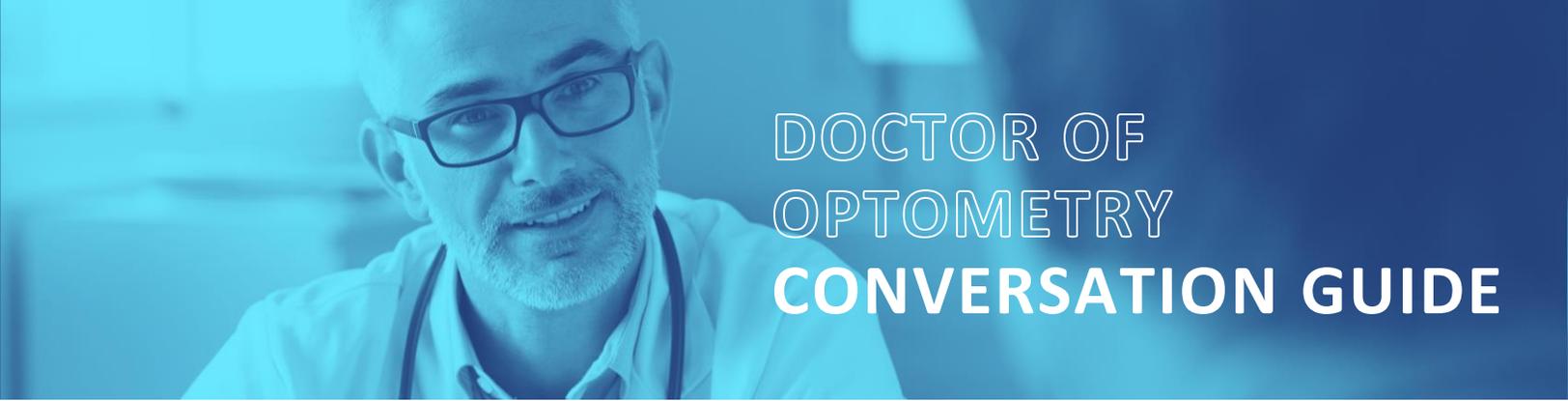
A major component of the 'Start With Eye' campaign is a partnership with Lyft, the transportation network. For a limited time only, the AOA is offering free round-trip ride codes (up to \$25) to anyone traveling to a local doctor of optometry beginning March 2, while supplies last. Rides will be offered in 10 select cities, including: Charleston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Indianapolis, Memphis, Miami, New York, St. Louis, and Seattle. As much, some materials included within the kit are general for all members, and some are specific to those cities where the Lyft partnership will be activated.

All of the contents of this kit are for you to customize and cobrand as you see fit, including:

- Conversation Guide (*to introduce the 'Start With Eye' campaign to patients*)
- Content for use on intranet, in newsletters or via social
- Materials for public outreach (*talking points, press release, sample pitch*)

The AOA will provide additional communications materials each quarter in 2020 to ensure you and your doctors have content to share during the course of the year. Yakesha Cooper, Public Relations Manager (ycooper@aoa.org), and Deirdre Middleton, Director of Strategic and Advocacy Communications (dmiddleton@aoa.org), are available to answer any questions you may have as you begin to roll-out your efforts.

**\*\*\*Please note that the materials included in this kit are to be distributed externally *after March 2* – the official date for the 'Start With Eye' campaign kickoff. Campaign URLs on AOA's website will NOT be active until that date.**



# DOCTOR OF OPTOMETRY CONVERSATION GUIDE

## START WITH EYE CAMPAIGN

The purpose of this document is to help guide your conversations with patients about the Start With Eye Campaign and answer any questions they may have.

### Introduction

The American Optometric Association (AOA) is the leading authority on quality care and an advocate for our nation's health, representing more than 44,000 doctors of optometry (O.D.), optometric professionals and optometry students.

**AOA conducted its annual Eye-Q survey, which aims to understand people's awareness and knowledge of eye health. The most recent results showed that:**

- Nearly three-fourths (72%) of Americans think they should go to an eye health professional for a comprehensive eye exam at least once a year, yet only half are going annually;
- Many Americans don't know that an eye disease diagnosis or a refraction are part of an eye exam; and
- 83% would like to learn more about how to take better care of their eyes.

### Overview of Start with Eye

Coinciding with Save Your Vision Month (March), the AOA is launching 'Start With Eye,' a multi-phased campaign to ensure consumers understand why an annual comprehensive eye exam is necessary. The campaign aims to raise awareness of the benefits of in-person eye exams with a doctor of optometry, even to those with 20/20 vision, and to remove the barriers stopping consumers from turning proper eyecare into an ongoing part of their healthcare routine.

**To help inform the public about these pressing issues, AOA is:**

- Launching a digital and influencer campaign with animated social assets that consumers are encouraged to share and engage with; and
- Partnering with Lyft in 10 markets to offer free rides to comprehensive eye exams to help alleviate the barriers of getting to appointments

## HOW THEY CAN GET INVOLVED

We'd love for your patients to get involved in the campaign, below are a few ways for them to do so:

# 01

### GET SOCIAL

Join the conversation on social. We want to hear from you either by engaging with **#2020EyeExam** or pushing out your own posts.

# 02

### SUBMIT YOUR STORY

Your eyes are important. So is your story. Share how you've taken care of your eyes with the help of an optometrist and we may post it on our website and social media. Submit your story at **AOA.org/StartWithEye**

# 03

### GET A LYFT

If you live in one of the 10 participating cities, use our code to get a free ride (up to \$25) to see your doctor of optometry for your comprehensive eye exam. Visit **AOA.org/Lyft** for more details.

# START WITH EYE TALKING POINTS



## START WITH EYE

### What does it mean to ‘Start With Eye?’

‘Start With Eye’ is a nationwide public health campaign the AOA is launching in March 2020 to coincide with ‘Save Your Vision Month.’ The multi-phased initiative is designed to foster awareness of the importance of eye health and vision care and the overall health benefits of an in-person, comprehensive eye examination with an AOA doctor of optometry, encouraging everyone to ‘Start with Eye.’

### What’s the point of the campaign?

‘Start With Eye’ will help people understand why comprehensive eye exams are too important to overlook in the year ahead. The campaign aims to raise awareness of the benefits of having an annual eye exam with a doctor of optometry, even to those with no current vision problems, and to remove the barriers stopping people from turning proper eyecare into an ongoing part of their healthcare routine.

## COMPREHENSIVE EYE EXAM

### What is a comprehensive eye exam?

A comprehensive eye exam conducted by a doctor of optometry determines the eye and vision health of a patient. During the exam, the doctor not only checks visual acuity through refraction, but also the health of your eyes, eye tissue and other diseases. Each patient’s symptoms, along with the doctor of optometry’s professional judgment, will determine what tests are conducted.

### Why is it important to get comprehensive eye exams with a licensed doctor of optometry?

An in-person, comprehensive eye exam with a doctor of optometry is the medically-recognized standard to assure precise and healthy vision, identify and treat diseases such as glaucoma, a leading cause of blindness. In addition, eye exams safeguard overall health by enabling the eye doctor to detect more than 270 serious health conditions including diabetes, high blood pressure, autoimmune diseases and cancers. In-person, comprehensive eye exams are one of the most important, preventive ways to preserve vision and overall health.

## ADDRESSING BARRIERS

### What are the barriers AOA has identified as preventing eye care?

We know that with increasingly busy lives, prioritizing your health can fall by the wayside. The AOA has identified lack of awareness, work schedules and convenience as some of the primary barriers preventing people from getting a yearly comprehensive eye exam.

Over half of Americans find it difficult to go to health care appointments, and list cost of appointments and taking time off work as the main reasons, according to the AOA's 2020 Eye-Q survey. If it were easier to schedule and attend health-related appointments, 73% of millennials said they would take better care of their eyes.

The survey also found six in ten (58%) of those who say it is difficult for them say it's because of the cost, nearly half (45%) say it's because of work, and a quarter (27%) say it's because it's hard to get to the location,

While finding a way to get to the eye doctor isn't the biggest deterrent, 42% say they would use a ride share app to get to or from a comprehensive eye exam in the future – with city dwellers being 36% and millennials being 45% more likely to say.

### How is AOA addressing these barriers?

Whether it's finding a doctor of optometry, navigating your work schedule or determining your transportation to your comprehensive eye exam, AOA is here to help. For example, many employees don't know that often times sick time can be used for preventive appointments, not just for when you're sick. Given the sharp rise in digital eye strain, keeping your eye health in check is valuable to your employer as well. If location and transportation are potential issues, finding a local doctor of optometry is easy with AOA's doctor locator, and getting there is seamless with the AOA's new partnership with Lyft during 'Save Your Vision' Month.

### What does the Lyft partnership entail?

For a limited time only, the AOA is offering free round-trip ride codes (up to \$25) to anyone traveling to the optometrist beginning March 2, while supplies last. Rides will be offered in 10 select cities, including: Charleston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Indianapolis, Memphis, Miami, New York, St. Louis, and Seattle. To access your local code, go to [AOA.org/Lyft](http://AOA.org/Lyft).

### What is Eye-Q?

The annual American Eye-Q survey identifies attitudes and behaviors of Americans regarding eye care. The 2020 survey revealed that many Americans are not paying enough attention to their eyesight and overall eye health. In fact, according to the survey, most Americans – 58% – have not visited a doctor of optometry for a comprehensive eye exam in the past two years – and a quarter (26%) don't think they need an exam since they can see clearly.



# SAMPLE MEMBER NEWSLETTER ANNOUNCEMENT

Coinciding with Save Your Vision Month (March), the American Optometric Association (AOA) is launching 'Start With Eye,' a multi-phased campaign to ensure the public understands why an annual comprehensive eye exam is necessary. As part of AOA's #2020EyeExam programming, the campaign aims to raise awareness of the benefits of in-person eye exams with a doctor of optometry and to remove the barriers stopping people from turning proper eyecare into an ongoing part of their healthcare routine.

## To help inform the public about these pressing issues, AOA is:

- Launching a digital and influencer campaign with animated social assets that consumers are encouraged to share and engage with; and
- Partnering with Lyft in 10 markets to offer free rides to comprehensive eye exams to help alleviate the barriers of getting to appointments. The 10 cities include: Charleston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Indianapolis, Memphis, Miami, New York, St. Louis, and Seattle.

*The AOA has developed a suite of resources to help doctors of optometry to promote the campaign to their patients, media and the public.*

*Join the #2020EyeExam movement by spreading the word and encouraging everyone to make an eye exam part of their annual primary care routine.*

## Here's how you can get involved:

- Download the Conversation Guide to help communicate with patients about the Start With Eye campaign
- Get #2020EyeExam promotional materials to use during Save Your Vision Month and beyond, including Eye-Q one-pager, photo signage, badge, stickers and customizable content.
- Share 'Start With Eye' social media posts on your channels and use the #2020EyeExam to tag the post.
- Learn how you can recruit local employers in AOA's #2020EyeExam Employer Pledge.

For more information visit [AOA.org/StartWithEye](https://AOA.org/StartWithEye)

# TEMPLATE PRESS RELEASE



## [Affiliate or local doctor] Joins the American Optometric Association's (AOA) 'Start With Eye' Campaign During 'Save Your Vision' Month

Awareness campaign is focused on educating the public on the benefits of comprehensive eye exams

[City, State – March XX, 2020] – [Affiliate or local doctor name here] is partnering with the American Optometric Association's (AOA) new public awareness campaign, 'Start With Eye', to highlight the critical importance of eyecare in overall health. According to AOA's new Eye-Q survey, only half of Americans are actually going for annual eye exams.

"Good vision is essential to quality of life and a comprehensive eye exam is an important, preventive way to preserve vision and maintain overall health," says [affiliate / spokesperson name here]. "We are thrilled to join with the AOA to spread awareness and encourage the citizens of [state] to schedule their in-person #2020EyeExam with a local doctor of optometry today."

A multi-phased campaign, 'Start With Eye' serves as a platform to ensure people understand why an annual comprehensive eye exam is necessary. The campaign aims to raise awareness of the benefits of eye exams even to those with 20/20 vision and to remove the barriers stopping patients from turning proper eyecare into an ongoing part of their healthcare routine.

**[FOR LYFT MARKETS ONLY]** As part of the initiative, AOA is working with Lyft, a transportation network, to offer free round-trip ride codes (up to \$25) to patients in select U.S. cities traveling to the optometrist beginning March 2, while supplies last. Rides will be offered in 10 select cities, including: Charleston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Indianapolis, Memphis, Miami, New York, St. Louis, and Seattle. To access your local code, go to [AOA.org/Lyft](https://AOA.org/Lyft) (for a limited time only).

Because eye health and vision problems may develop without any obvious signs or symptoms, in-person, annual comprehensive eye exams with doctors of optometry are important to detect early signs of visual system diseases such as glaucoma, a leading cause of blindness. In addition, eye exams safeguard overall health by enabling the doctor of optometry to detect more than 270 serious health conditions including diabetes, high blood pressure, autoimmune diseases and cancers.

For instance, according to the AOA data, 21 percent of participants said they have been diagnosed with a non-eye related health issue such as STIs, high cholesterol, and diabetes, by an eye health professional; while 52 percent said they had not received a comprehensive eye exam in the past two years.

"Doctors of optometry play a pivotal role in identifying various health care needs beyond eye health," said AOA President Barbara L. Horn, O.D. "AOA's new 'Start With Eye' 2020 campaign gives the public the facts tied to the benefits of an annual comprehensive eye exam while also encouraging people to take the time to get their eyes checked."

March's Save Your Vision Month is the perfect time to 'Start With Eye' and schedule an in-person, comprehensive eye exam. [state] residents can find a local doctor at [AOA.org](https://AOA.org).



# SAMPLE PITCH

## START WITH EYE CAMPAIGN (NON-LYFT MARKETS)

Nearly three-fourths (72%) of Americans think they should go to an eye health professional for a comprehensive eye exam at least once a year, yet only half (54%) are going annually. With up to 16 million Americans struggling with undiagnosed or untreated vision impairments, annual comprehensive eye exams provided by a doctor of optometry are crucial to address this public health crisis.

During Save Your Vision Month in March, the [insert state affiliate] is partnering with the American Optometric Association (AOA) to encourage everyone to ‘Start With Eye’ and schedule a comprehensive eye exam—the simplest step in preserving eye and overall health.

Eye health and vision problems may develop without any obvious signs or symptoms. Through these exams, doctors of optometry can identify early signs of more than 270 different diseases – such as diabetes, high blood pressure, multiple sclerosis, and some kinds of cancer. For example, in 2018, doctors of optometry identified signs of diabetes in more than 301,000 patients who did not know they had it, leading to earlier management of the disease.

A multi-phased campaign, ‘Start With Eye’ serves as a platform to raise awareness of the benefits of eye exams even to those with 20/20 vision and to remove the barriers stopping patients from turning proper eyecare into an ongoing part of their healthcare routine.

Would you be interested in learning more about how doctors of optometry in [state] are working to improve the eye health and vision care across the state? I’m happy to provide additional eye health and vision data from the 2020 Eye-Q survey and/or coordinate an interview with a spokesperson from XXX.

Thank you for your consideration,

Name

Organization

Contact Information

## LYFT ACTIVATION – LOCAL ANGLE

\*\*\* (For use by state affiliates in the following 10 cities: Charleston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Indianapolis, Memphis, Miami, New York, St. Louis, and Seattle)

A quarter of Americans (27%) say getting their comprehensive eye exam is challenging because it's hard to get to the location, according to the American Optometric Association's annual Eye-Q consumer survey. The survey also found that 61% of millennials would use a ride share app to get to an exam.

During March's Save Your Vision Month, the [insert state affiliate] is partnering with the American Optometric Association (AOA) and Lyft, a transportation network, to offer people in [city] free rides in an effort to make it easier to get their annual comprehensive eye exam with a doctor of optometry.

Because eye health and vision problems may develop without any obvious signs or symptoms, in-person, annual comprehensive eye exams with doctors of optometry are important to detect early signs of visual system diseases such as glaucoma, a leading cause of blindness. In addition, eye exams safeguard overall health by enabling the doctor of optometry to detect more than 270 serious health conditions including diabetes, high blood pressure, autoimmune diseases and cancers.

The activation is part of AOA's yearlong 'Start With Eye' campaign to raise awareness of the benefits of eye exams even to those with 20/20 vision and to remove the barriers stopping patients from turning proper eyecare into an ongoing part of their healthcare routine.

Would you be interested in learning more about how doctors of optometry in [state] are working to improve the eye health and vision care across the state? I'm happy to provide additional eye health and vision data from the 2020 Eye-Q survey and/or coordinate an interview with a spokesperson from XXX.

Thank you for your consideration,

Name

Organization

Contact Information



# SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

It's Save Your Vision Month and doctors of optometry nationwide are encouraging everyone to 'Start With Eye' make eye health and vision a priority for the entire family by scheduling a 2020 eye exam today! **#2020EyeExam**

Headaches, itchy or tired eyes, loss of focus and blurred vision are all symptoms of digital eye strain. If you haven't had your annual eye exam, Save Your Vision Month is the perfect time to check your eye and vision health. **#2020EyeExam**

March is Save Your Vision Month. Remember to 'Start With Eye' and schedule your in-person comprehensive eye exam with a local doctor of optometry today! **#2020EyeExam**

Annual eye exams not only ensure optimal vision, but help maintain one's overall health and safety. It's time to 'Start With Eye' and schedule your annual comprehensive eye exam today! **#2020EyeExam**

Committing to spending less time on digital devices and more time outside is just one way you can start taking care of your eye and vision health. How are you going to 'Start With Eye' during Save Your Vision Month? **#2020EyeExam**

According to the American Optometric Association's 2020 Eye-Q survey, over ¼ (29%) of Americans can't or don't know if they can use their sick time to attend health care appointments – ask your employer today. If you know, you should go! **#2020EyeExam**

Wow! During a comprehensive eye exam, doctors of optometry can identify early warning signs and manifestations of more than 270 systemic and chronic diseases, including diabetes, high blood pressure, autoimmune diseases and cancers. It's time to 'Start With Eye' and get your **#2020EyeExam!**

Did you know non-eye related health issues can be detected by visiting a doctor of optometry? According to the American Optometric Association's 2020 Eye-Q survey, one in five (21%) Americans has been diagnosed with a non-eye related health issue, such as hypertension, STIs, high cholesterol, and diabetes by an eye health professional.

There's NOT an app for that! Comprehensive, annual eye exams with a doctor of optometry are one of the most important, preventive ways to preserve healthy eyes and vision, and the only way to accurately assess eye and vision health, diagnose an eye disorder or disease, and determine proper treatment. **#2020EyeExam**

Nearly half of Americans have noticed eye issues as a direct result of using electronic devices, according to the American Optometric Association's 2020 Eye-Q survey. During Save Your Vision Month, visit your local doctor of optometry to check your eyes out so you can scroll and swipe responsibly. **#2020EyeExam**



# THIS IS A WINDOW TO YOUR OVERALL HEALTH

Comprehensive eye exams allow optometrists to test for nearsightedness and farsightedness, detect and prevent a number of illnesses and monitor how your eye health is impacting the rest of your body.

**Think that's surprising? Wait until you read these eye-opening stats.**

**MANY AMERICANS DON'T KNOW THAT A REFRACTION OR AN EYE DISEASE DIAGNOSIS ARE PART OF AN EYE EXAM**

**83%**

would like to learn about how to take better care of their eyes.

**53%**

of millennials say they don't know how to take good care of their eyes.

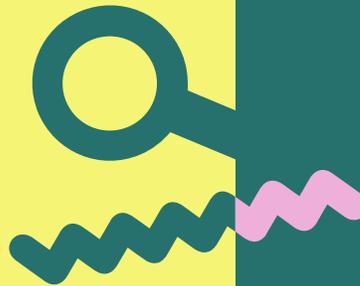
**YOU'RE IN THE RIGHT PLACE.**

*ask your doctor of optometry how to take care of your eyes and what's involved in a comprehensive eye exam.*



**72%**

of Americans think they should go to an eye health professional at least once a year, yet only half (54%) are actually going annually.

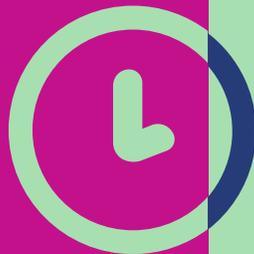


**1 in 5**

Americans have been diagnosed with a non-eye related health issue such as hypertension, STIs, high cholesterol, and diabetes by an eye health professional.

**29%**

of Americans can't or don't know if they can use their sick time to attend health care appointments—ask your employer today.



**46%**

of Americans have noticed eye issues as a direct result of using electronic devices.

**A DOCTOR OF OPTOMETRY WILL BE ABLE TO CHECK YOUR EYES OUT SO YOU CAN SCROLL, SWIPE, AND FAVE RESPONSIBLY.**



## RESOURCES

### Start With Eye

[AOA.org/StartWithEye](https://www.aoa.org/StartWithEye)

### Lyft Activation

[AOA.org/lyft](https://www.aoa.org/lyft)

### #2020EyeExam Promotional Materials

[AOA.org/2020/promotional-tools](https://www.aoa.org/2020/promotional-tools)

### AOA Doctor Locator

[AOA.org/doctorlocator](https://www.aoa.org/doctorlocator)

### #2020EyeExam Video on the Value of Eye Exams

<https://youtu.be/TUVfeSlaA0M>

### AOA Social Media Channels

[facebook.com/American.Optometric.Association/](https://www.facebook.com/American.Optometric.Association/)

[twitter.com/AOAConnect](https://twitter.com/AOAConnect)

[instagram.com/americanoptometricassociation](https://www.instagram.com/americanoptometricassociation)



