Here are five things people can do to cut their risk of eye damage from the sun*:

1. **Wear the right sunglasses** – Look for those labeled “UV400” or “100 percent UV protection” when buying sunglasses. Less costly sunglasses with this label can be just as effective as the expensive kind. Darkness or color doesn’t indicate strength of UV protection. UV rays can go through clouds, so wear sunglasses even on overcast days. And while contacts may offer some benefit, they cannot protect the entire eye area from burning rays.

*KU Eye Optometrist, Dirck DeKeyser, OD, says the UV protection is why it is so important to choose wisely when buying sunglasses. “The main thing is UV protection. You want to be sure you’re protecting yourself against those high-energy lights, because those are the ones most prone to cause damage to the eye,” said DeKeyser.

Corey Hart must be a Very big fan of eye protection, going as far as to wear his sunglasses at night!

2. **Don’t stare at the sun** – Sun worshippers take note: directly gazing at the sun can burn holes in the retina, the light-sensitive layer of cells in the back of the eye needed for central vision. This condition is called solar retinopathy. While rare, the damage is irreversible.

3. **Check your medication labels** – One in three adults uses medication that could make the eyes more vulnerable to UV ray damage, according to a sun safety survey by the Academy. These include certain antibiotics, birth control and estrogen pills, and psoriasis treatments containing psoralen. Check the labels on your prescriptions to see if they cause photosensitivity. If so, make sure to protect your skin and eyes or avoid sun exposure when possible.

4. **Put a lid on it** – In addition to shades, consider wearing a hat with broad brim. They have been shown to significantly cut exposure to harmful rays. Don’t forget the sunscreen!

5. **Don’t drive without UV eye protection** – Don’t assume that car windows are protecting you from UV light. A recent study found that side windows blocked only 71 percent of rays, compared to 96 percent in the windshield. Only 14 percent of side windows provided a high enough level of protection, the researchers found. So when you buckle up, make sure you are wearing glasses or sunglasses with the right UV protection.

*Source: [https://www.aao.org/newsroom/news-releases/detail/five-tips-to-protect-your-eyes-from-sun-damage](https://www.aao.org/newsroom/news-releases/detail/five-tips-to-protect-your-eyes-from-sun-damage)