



Opticians & Audiologists

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **Use your common sense this World Health Day**

SPECSAVERS' opticians and audiologists are urging people to have their eyes and ears checked this World Health Day (7 April).

Not only could this help preserve vision and hearing, but tests can pick up signs of other underlying conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure and even signs of brain tumours.

At least half of all sight loss is avoidable, yet every day 250 people start to lose their sight in the UK, and one in five people will live with sight loss in their lifetime.<sup>1</sup>

Specsavers optometrist, Dr Josie Forte, says: 'A trip to the optician can do so much more than check your vision. Less than half the time taken during an eye appointment involves testing sight – most of the time we are assessing the health of the eye itself, and signs of your wider health too.'

Opticians look for indicators of eye conditions, including cataracts, glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration, and general health issues, such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

Dr Josie Forte continues: 'We encourage everyone to get their eyes checked every two years. As well as a check of your vision, a routine sight test might just reveal a more serious sight-threatening or wider health condition.'

Hearing checks can help in the battle against dementia. Research has found that there is an increased risk of disability and dementia in those with hearing loss, and, in men

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<sup>1</sup> Specsavers and RNIB State of the National Eye Health report with YouGov

only, an increased risk of depression. These associations were not found in the participants using hearing aids<sup>2</sup>.

Gordon Harrison, Specsavers' chief audiologist, says: 'Having your hearing tested could be a simple step to ensure you are taking care of your ear health, and in turn, could reduce your chance of developing dementia.'

'Hearing loss can sometimes be sudden, but more often than not, it happens gradually and you may not notice it at first, so it's worth having your hearing tested every two years regardless, once you reach 55. For many, it can take up to 10 years to seek help for hearing loss, but don't put it off – it may do more for your health than you realise.'

Keeping on top of your health will ensure you are still able to do the things you love. To book your next appointment visit [www.specsavers.co.uk](http://www.specsavers.co.uk)

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Issued by Beattie Communications on behalf of Specsavers

[specsavers.com](http://specsavers.com)



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**For more information on eye health contact the Specsavers press team:**

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### **Notes to Editors**

- Specsavers is a partnership of almost 2,000 locally-run businesses throughout the world -all committed to delivering high quality, affordable optical and hearing care in the communities they serve.
- Each store is part-owned and managed by its own joint venture partners who are supported by key specialists in support offices
- More than 36 million customers are registered with Specsavers and the partnership had a turnover of more than £2.6bn in 2017/18
- More than one in three people who wear glasses in the UK buy them from Specsavers

- Specsavers is a champion of the National Health Service – of its 22.2m customers in the UK, 55% are from the NHS and the company is the largest provider of free NHS digital hearing aids
- Specsavers supports several UK charities and is in partnership with RNIB for a public awareness campaign to transform the nation's eye health.
- Specsavers runs a home-visiting service in the UK and Ireland called for those who cannot get to their local store unaccompanied.