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## 5 Questions you should ask your optometrist at your next visit.

(adapted from the Hruska Clinic PRIME Program Website Blog [www.PRIMENGAGEMENT.com](http://www.PRIMENGAGEMENT.com))

Getting your eyes checked is vital for both vision and overall health, as the visual system is closely linked to your posture. When visiting your optometrist, consider asking questions to maximize your appointment. *Your prescription can significantly impact BOTH how you feel in your body and how you see.*

It is recommend to have a walk outside prior to your visit, standing instead of sitting while waiting and avoid going into the “device” posture (looking down at small screen) for extended periods before having your vision assessment. If you are working with a PRI-trained therapist, they might also have some specific tasks they want you to do before your vision assessment.

### 1) Could you make sure I’m not over-corrected for distance in my prescription?

The traditional method of testing your eyes for clarity, called a refraction, is done to give you the clearest vision you “want”. When you choose “which is better one or two” the optometrist is using your answers to determine what you want to see clearer. They will keep giving you more and more clarity and power in your glasses until you start saying you don’t like it. Often, we see people being prescribed more distance power (i.e. they can see clearer than 20/20) for their glasses and contacts than they need, because they “asked for it” during the refraction. Often people prefer the extra prescription (due to extra contrast or darkness) without actually being able to see more letters. So this extra power that you might “like” may not actually help you see better *but may also be keeping your body and visual system tight*, especially if you have a lot of near visual demand in your life.

\*\*Asking for a maximal “plus” prescription without sacrificing your clarity worse than 20/20 can sometimes make a big difference for improving how you feel without sacrificing how you see. Also making sure each eye is refracted to as much of a similar clarity with this maximal plus prescription can limit either eye from easily becoming more dominant for use at either near or far.

### 2) Could we do my distance refraction in standing rather than sitting?

This may be something to ask ahead of time and in some offices may not be able to be done based on their set up. Some optometrists will ask why you would ask this because it is just out of their normal way of doing things. The way your eyes “work” for balance and posture is affected by the position you are in. There is often a small difference in your prescription when measured in standing vs. sitting. In the PRI Prime program standing refractions are the norm for this reason. Be sure to wear your good shoes if you are going to do a standing refraction. If you



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use your glasses more when you are on your feet this might have an impact on you. When refracting for computer distance or near distance sitting is probably more appropriate.

### **3) Is there any hint my 2 eyes aren't working together?**

Often the refractions are done one eye at a time and then briefly the 2 eyes are tested together. As long as you are satisfied with the way you see during this brief check the job is done. However, the way your brain "likes" or uses one eye at a time vs. two eyes together may be different. If you don't at least ask the question this part might be underassessed. The prescription that allows you to use your eyes together may be slightly different than the prescription that is the most clear for each eye.

### **4) Do either of my eyes want to drift out or in when I try to focus at near or far?**

This can be fairly common and may not be a significant issue but this can tell a little about how much (or little) you may be using your eyes for posture/balance. If you don't ask, this may be missed or not assessed.

### **5) How is my peripheral vision?**

Refraction and traditional optometry focuses (pun intended) on clarity. However 70% of the message your brain gets from your eyes is your peripheral vision which is what is used mainly for posture, balance and orientation. "Where am I?" is answered by your peripheral vision. "What is it?" is answered by your focal vision. If there is something limiting your peripheral vision we want that to be addressed.