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Dear Patients, Neighbors and Friends:

Our guess is that you, like many of us, spent many of the cold winter days indoors - reading, watching TV, and doing inside activities. Most of these tasks required using your eyes, often for hours at a time. Now is the time to let us examine your eyes thoroughly to make sure that everything is working fine and that you do not have any problems that need attention. Periodic routine exams are good preventive medicine, and we are willing and ready to make sure that the only set of eyes you will ever have are in top notch condition.

**FRAME TRUNK SHOW ON APRIL 16<sup>th</sup>:** We have arranged with some of the most popular and respected eyeglass frame companies to set up special exhibits of their latest frames on Thursday night, April 16<sup>th</sup> from 4 PM to 7 PM in our office. There is, of course, no charge for this exhibit but we would appreciate your calling to make a reservation for the event. You will be able to try on the latest in fashion frames and many new lines of more affordable models. We will have frame styles from famous designers like Coach, Gucci, Perry Ellis, Levi's®, and Vera Bradley. Correct prescriptions and lenses are most important for good eye care; nonetheless, you might as well look your best in the eyeglasses you wear. We can help.

**RUNNING CAN HELP, STUDY INDICATES:** According to two studies published in January, "the more miles men and women ran, the less likely they were to develop age-related macular degeneration (AMD)." In addition, the studies note that running also lowered the risk of cataracts for men.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY VARILUX®:** This year Varilux, the progressive addition lenses we recommend to just about all of our presbyopic patients (those over the age of forty), celebrates its 50th year of existence. Invented in France, Varilux lenses allow you to focus at distance and near, and everything in between, with no dividing line. Dr. Bennett's father was the first optometrist in the United States to fit this lens. Its introduction at the dawn of the computer age was timely, as computer or mid-range vision has become more and more important (and traditional bifocals aren't capable of correcting this). Varilux lenses have certainly come a long way in the past 50 years — there have been many copies of Varilux (you see them advertised as "progressive lenses" or "no-line bifocals"), but there are no real substitutes for the quality of Varilux. That is why we continue to recommend it.

**IN FLIGHT ADVICE:** Airplane cabin air is very dry, with as low as 10 percent humidity, so keeping your eyes moist is important. Direct the air vents away from you and use artificial tears once an hour if your eyes feel dry. Avoid drops that "get the red out" as they will constrict blood vessels and make the eye drier. And, remember to wear your glasses instead of your

contact lenses while flying.

**STUDY PROVES EFFECTIVENESS OF VISION THERAPY:** A study recently published in the *Archives of Ophthalmology* concluded that in-office vision therapy is the most effective treatment for convergence insufficiency. Convergence insufficiency, the most common eye teaming problem, is a condition where the eyes do not turn in properly when doing near tasks. Patients experience symptoms such as eyestrain, discomfort when reading, or double vision. In children, this can lead to poor concentration at school and avoidance of near tasks. Since Dr. Maida joined our practice, we have been able to offer vision therapy to our patients who require it right here in Belmont. Already, many patients are having relief of their vision symptoms. If you are having any of these symptoms, please tell us at your next eye exam.

**SPRING IS IN THE AIR; YOUR ALLERGIES MAY FLARE:** As many as half of the American population experiences allergies – and 9 out of 10 allergy sufferers have eye symptoms. Symptoms of allergies in the eye may include eye itching, watering, irritation, redness, discharge, and swelling. There are several treatment options for allergies that we can recommend and prescribe, and it is important to tailor the treatment to each individual's eyes and lifestyle. Beware that these symptoms may indicate other eye conditions as well, so do come in for an eye check if you are experiencing eye problems so that we can correctly diagnose and treat your eyes.

We will *NOT* compromise on our high quality eye care. If your insurance provider is one that we don't take, we hope that you will still select us for your eye care needs. After all, an eye exam isn't all that expensive when you think about what you might spend on a new outfit or dinner out. Many of our patients have opted to use Flexible Spending Account dollars towards eye care and eyewear purchased in our office. You only get one pair of eyes! We look forward to seeing you.

Sincerely,



Linda Bennett, O.D.



Melanie Macbeth, O.D.



Rebecca Maida, O.D.



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Here Dr. Maida is working with a young patient to improve her eye teaming ability. Both this youngster and her mother have already noticed improvements in her focus and speed of reading.