

# EYE HEALTHCARE

## WINTER SPORTS

The time of year has come again when those of us who enjoy skiing and snow boarding depart for higher altitudes. This environment is the harshest on the eyes as the 'thinner' atmosphere is less effective at filtering out ultraviolet (UV) rays. The snow surface reflects up to twice (unlike a sandy beach which absorbs) the sun's UV rays, and its effect increases 5% for every 1000m of altitude, leaving the design and type of protective eyewear absolutely imperative.

Most Ski goggles cover the upper portion of the face for optimum protection (being made of non brittle materials e.g. nylon and rubber) and ensure a wide field of view (achieving up to 180° of peripheral vision). When choosing, insist on polycarbonate lenses offering 100% UVA, B and C protection, as well as 'Anti-fogging' protection, be it through air vents built

into the frame, 'double layered' lenses or indeed 'Anti fog' coatings.

A quick change lens system is also very useful where 'rose' and 'yellow' lenses are good for dull days, whereas 'black' and 'grey' suit very bright conditions. For those requiring an optical correction, small neat 'inserts' are most commonly used, resting between the outer lens and the eye.

The lack of good eye protection causes a sunburn effect (photokeratitis) where the eyes become gritty, red and sore, or indeed longer term effects such as cataracts and pterygium. Your optician will advise you on the ideal solution before you go on holiday.

Noel McCrystal  
BSc.(Hons.)MCOptom.Dip.Sc.V MASv.P

Scotch Street Centre  
T: 028 87722379

[www.mccrystalopticians.com](http://www.mccrystalopticians.com)