

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, Phoenixville Eye Care Specialists has taken action to ensure the safety of both our patients and staff through strict, in-office safety protocol and a temporary pause in non-urgent care. However, interrupting the non-urgent medical eye care and routine eye care of many patients over the past few months is not something we take lightly.

**That's why we are pleased to share that effective immediately, with ramping up throughout the end of May and early June, Phoenixville Eye Care Specialists will be able to safely return patients to our offices for routine and non-urgent medical eye care. In addition, cataract surgery and optician services have resumed effective immediately, initially though on a slightly decreased basis but soon to be increased. We will be resuming laser surgeries shortly as well.**

We understand this is **not** a time to let our guard down, and our doctors and staff will continue diligently working to ensure the safety of those who seek care in our office. Additionally, our team is in continuous dialogue with both national and local health authorities to ensure proper safety protocol is in place to protect our patients. We are following all rules enacted by Governor Wolf about safe reopening of businesses who has given us the all-clear as long as we have proper safety procedures in place.

Ultimately, it is important to address the many clinical needs of our patients, as well as critical health screenings and procedures that have been postponed recently, such as glaucoma followups, macular degeneration checks , contact lens followups and diabetic eye exams, many of which are essential to maintaining the ocular well-being of our community. We also believe that good eyesight via proper eyewear is essential to healthy functioning, even when someone is quarantined at home.

### **Feel Confident in Your Care**

Now that we better understand the risks and spread of COVID-19, we are more prepared than ever to help ensure a safe environment for patients to access care. Our office and our two surgical centers are taking the following precautions, as well as requiring participation from patients, to minimize exposure and help you feel confident in receiving the quality eye care you deserve.

## What You Can Expect from Us:

- **Extensive Cleaning.** Cleaning of exams rooms takes place between each patient visit, along with frequent disinfecting of our welcome areas and frequently touched surfaces.
- **Enforcement of Social Distancing.** Our welcome areas have been arranged to provide more separation between seats. We are also encouraging patients to wait in their cars whenever possible. After you check-in, we will be happy to send you a text when we are ready for you. Completing new patient paperwork in advance whenever possible will minimize extra time in our waiting room. Social distancing is enforced in the dilation area or when possible patients may remain in their exam room while dilating.
- **Limited and Adjusted Schedules.** While we are pleased to welcome back more patients, we are doing so with an abundance of caution, reducing the number of appointments each day to have less individuals in our office at the same time. If you have an upcoming appointment previously scheduled, it's possible you may be contacted to reschedule if necessary, in order to achieve this. Stay tuned as we may add longer office days or an occasional Saturday to accommodate fewer patients per hour and catch patients up on visits that they missed in April and May.
- **Patient Screening.** We will continue to screen all patients with our COVID-19 screening questions and will be closely monitoring patient temperatures.
- **Staff Screening.** All staff are screened daily for symptoms of COVID-19 and temperatures are checked daily prior to beginning their shifts. Anyone exhibiting symptoms, or who has been in close contact with an individual with symptoms of COVID-19, will be quarantined according to [current CDC guidelines](#) prior to returning to work.

## What You Should Do:

- **Wear a Mask. All patients should bring a mask or facial covering to wear at all times when in our offices.** Our staff members are also required to wear a mask. At times we may ask you to briefly hold your breath-dont be alarmed. Not only does it keep staff and patients safer, but it allows every to see more clearly instead of fogging up the many lenses we all use to complete the eye exam thoroughly but efficiently.

- **Don't Bring Visitors.** At this time we prefer it if additional family members, including children, do not come into our office. Exceptions will be made for medically necessary assistance, or if the patient is a minor.
- **Stay Home if You're Unwell.** If you are experiencing fever, cough, or shortness of breath, please call us to reschedule or shift your visit to a telemedicine appointment if your eye condition is suitable for that. COVID-19 can present with conjunctivitis, so in the interest of everyone's safety we may recommend you do not come into the office and followup with the local ER instead.

### **Don't Put Your Health on Hold**

At Phoenixville Eye Care Specialists, your well-being is not elective. In addition to in-office visits, we are also offering virtual visits when your eye condition warrants it (red eyes, chalazions, etc.) Contact the office to schedule a telemedicine appointment, and connect with your doctor via your laptop, tablet, or mobile phone. We have created a special email address, [urgentb14@vantageeyecare.com](mailto:urgentb14@vantageeyecare.com), for you to send photos of your ocular condition. A technician or physician will respond to you as soon as possible. Please be patient as our staff learns to navigate all the changes in safety and healthcare; we will definitely get back to you as soon as we can.

### **Stay Connected**

We want to stay connected with you and we look forward to seeing you in our office soon! In the meantime, [visit our website](#) for updates related to COVID-19 and your care.

Please stay well, and above all, ***don't put your ocular health on hold***. Our eye doctors are here for you to do whatever it takes to help you see properly!

Sincerely,

Jamine L. Shechter, MD, Owner, Phoenixville Eye Care Specialists  
Division, Vantage Eye Care

Susan R. Wilton, MD

Thomas Gulibon, OD

