



MEDIA RELEASE

6 November 2007

St John reveals the truth about your eyes

Everybody loves to believe in an old wife's tale – but could you be damaging your health by believing in something that isn't true? Below Joanna Barton, of St John Ophthalmic Care, reveals the truth surrounding particular myths about eye care.

St John is currently raising funds to purchase equipment for the Pius X Eye Clinic in Moree, which provides eye services for the people of North-Western NSW.

The Clinic was established in August 2006 to address the high incidence of eye disease in the rural and remote communities of New South Wales, particularly among the Aboriginal population. Until recently, there was no comprehensive eye service available to those living in North Western NSW.

St John is holding a Silver Dinner at the Westin Hotel, Sydney on 13 November 2007. For tickets and more information visit www.stjohnnsw.com.au.

Eye myths

Myth: Eating carrots will improve your vision.

Truth: Carrots contain Vitamin A, which is important for a good balanced diet. Other foods also contain Vitamin A, however, they won't help improve your vision.

Myth: Failure to use proper glasses will hurt your eyes.

Truth: Wearing the wrong lenses will not physically damage your eyes. Children under eight should only wear their own prescription glasses to prevent them developing a lazy eye.

Myth: Reading in dim light can damage your eyes.

Truth: Reading in dim light will not weaken your eye sight.

Myth: There's nothing you can do about preventing sight loss.

Truth: With education and new technology there are many ways to prevent vision loss.

Myth: An eye exam is only necessary if you're having problems.



MEDIA RELEASE

Truth: Eye conditions that can result in vision loss may have no symptoms. Regular eye check-ups are recommended.

Myth: Sitting too close to the television will hurt your eyes.

Truth: This does not hurt or damage your eyes but may give you a headache.

Myth: Children usually outgrow crossed eyes.

Truth: Children do not outgrow crossed eyes.

Myth: Children do not need eye examinations until they are in school.

Truth: Children need an eye examination at birth, preschool and when parents or carers have any concerns.

Myth: Cataracts can not be removed until they are ripe.

Truth: With the modern surgical procedures we have today a cataract can be removed whenever it interferes with a person's lifestyle.

Myth: Cataracts can be removed with a laser.

Truth: A cloudy lens is removed through a surgical incision

Myth: Eyes can be transplanted.

Truth: The eye can not be transplanted as it is connected to the brain.

Myth: Your sight will wear out if you use it too much.

Truth: Eyes do not wear out

Myth: Using computers can damage your eyes.

Truth: Working on computers will not harm your eyes.

Myth: Eye trouble is the cause of learning disabilities.

Truth: There is no strong evidence that vision problems cause learning disabilities.

ENDS



MEDIA RELEASE

For interviews or to find out more about the St John Ophthalmic Branch, please contact:

Bethany Hoskin
Communications Coordinator
St John (NSW)
P: 9219 6856
E: bethany_hoskin@stjohnnsw.com.au

Notes to editors:

Through the work of its members over the decades, St John Ambulance Australia has developed iconic stature in the Australian community for its humanitarian and charitable works. Within St John (NSW), in addition to the well recognised First Aid Services, is the Ophthalmic Care branch. In August 2006 the branch established the St John Pius X Eye Clinic in Moree, to offer eye surgery services for the people of North-Western NSW. Funding for the program was also provided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and the NSW Health Service.

The Clinic was established to address the high incidence of eye disease in the rural and remote communities of New South Wales, particularly among the Aboriginal population. Until recently, there was no comprehensive eye service available to those living in North Western NSW.

St John (NSW) secured the services of leading Ophthalmologists and has helped to raise funds for equipment for the Clinic. The Clinic opened in October 2006, and over 60 operations have already been conducted.

St John (NSW) is now raising funds to purchase a mobile eye care facility to extend the Pius X St John Eye Clinic services to more remote and isolated indigenous communities.

The comprehensive eye service now established within Pius X Clinic is a valuable resource for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people of North-West NSW.