August is Cataract Awareness Month

What is a Cataract?

Cataract -- a clouding of the lens of the eye -- is the leading cause of vision loss in people over age 55. More than half of people over age 65 have some degree of cataracts development, and more than half of people over age 80 either have a cataract or have had cataracts surgery.

Symptoms include:

- ☑ Blurry vision.
- ☑ Colors that appear faded.
- ☑ Glare.
- ☑ Difficulty seeing well at night.
- ☑ Double vision.

Most cataracts develop when aging or injury changes the tissue that makes up your eye's lens. Some cataracts are caused by inherited genetic disorders that cause other health problems and increase your risk of cataracts.

Prevention-

It's not clear what causes cataracts, but doctors think you may be able to reduce your risk of cataracts if you:

- ☑ **Have regular eye exams.** Eye exams can help detect cataracts and other eye problems at their earliest stages.
- ☑ **Quit smoking.**
- ☑ **Wear sunglasses.** Wear sunglasses that block ultraviolet B (UVB) rays when you're outdoors.
- ☑ **Take care of other health problems.** Follow your treatment plan if you have diabetes or other medical conditions that can increase your risk of cataracts.
- ☑ **Maintain a healthy weight.** If your current weight is a healthy one, work to maintain it by exercising most days of the week. If you're overweight or obese, work to lose weight slowly by reducing your calorie intake and increasing the amount of exercise you get each day.
- ☑ **Choose a healthy diet that includes plenty of fruits and vegetables.** Adding a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables to your diet ensures that you're getting a lot of vitamins and nutrients. Fruits and vegetables are full of antioxidants, which in theory could prevent damage to your eye's lens.

By: The Mayo Clinic

How a Cataract forms-

- ☑ The lens, where cataracts form, is positioned behind the colored part of your eye (iris). The lens focuses light that passes into your eye, producing clear, sharp images on the retina — the light-sensitive membrane on the back inside wall of your eyeball that functions like the film of a camera. A cataract scatters the light as it passes through the lens, preventing a sharply defined image from reaching your retina. As a result, your vision becomes blurred.
- ☑ As you age, the lenses in your eyes become less flexible, less transparent and thicker. Aging-related changes to the lens cause tissues to break down and to clump together, clouding small areas of the lens. As the cataract continues to develop, the clouding becomes denser and involves a greater part of the lens.
- ☑ A cataract can develop in one or both of your eyes.

Recipe of the Month

Halibut w/Tomato Basil Salsa
Serves 4

Ingredients:
-2 tomatoes, diced
-2tablespoons fresh basil, chopped
-1 teaspoon fresh oregano, chopped
-1 tablespoon minced garlic
-2teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
-4 halibut filets, each 4 ounces

Directions:
Preheat the oven to 350 F. Lightly coat a 9x13-inch baking pan with cooking spray.
In a small bowl, combine the tomato, basil, oregano, and garlic. Add the olive oil and mix well.
Arrange the halibut filets on the baking pan. Spoon the tomato mixture over the fish. Place in the oven and bake until the fish is opaque throughout when tested with the tip of a knife, about 10 to 15 minutes.

Nutritional Information:
Calories 160, Total Fat 5g, Cholesterol 36mg, Total Carbs 3g, Dietary fiber 1g, Protein 24g