



Lions Eye Health Program

# Low Vision

## See Well for a Lifetime





# Is Vision Loss Part of Getting Older?

- Vision can change as we age.
- Vision loss and blindness are not a normal part of aging.





## What Vision Changes Are Normal?

- Focusing on objects up close is harder to do.
- Noticing declining sensitivity.
- Needing more light to see well.
- Needing more time to adjust to changing levels of light.



## What Is Low Vision?

- Vision that is not corrected by eyeglasses, contact lenses, medication, or surgery.
- Low vision may make everyday tasks difficult to do.





## What Causes Low Vision?

- Sometimes vision loss occurs because of eye injuries or birth defects.
- Most people develop low vision because of the following:
  - Age-related macular degeneration
  - Cataract
  - Diabetic eye disease
  - Glaucoma



## Signs of Low Vision

- Even with your regular glasses or contact lenses, you have difficulty with the following:
  - Recognizing familiar faces.
  - Reading.
  - Cooking.
  - Picking out and matching the color of your clothes.
  - Reading street signs.



# How Do You Know When To Get an Eye Exam?

- When you experience vision changes.
- Make it a part of your routine health care:
  - People aged 50 or older should have a comprehensive dilated eye exam.





# How Do You Know if You Have Low Vision?

- Only an eye care professional can tell if you have low vision.





# What Is a Low Vision Assessment?

- A low vision assessment determines the extent of vision loss and potential for vision rehabilitation.



# What Is a Low Vision Assessment?

*(Continued)*

- The specialist in low vision will assess the following:
  - Your general health and eye health history.
  - Functions of daily living related to your vision.
  - Your visual acuity and other eye functions.



# What Can You Do if You Have Low Vision?

- Take charge.
- Visit your eye care professional or a specialist in low vision.
- Ask about vision rehabilitation.
- Learn about low vision devices and services.



## Vision Rehabilitation

- Offers information about devices and services.
- Helps people adapt to vision loss and maintain their independence.





## Where Can You Go for Services?

- Ophthalmology or optometry offices that specialize in low vision.
- Hospital clinics.
- State, nonprofit, or for-profit vision rehabilitation organizations.
- Independent-living centers.



## How Can You Find a Specialist?

- Talk with your eye care professional about local resources.
- Visit [www.nei.nih.gov/lowvision](http://www.nei.nih.gov/lowvision)



## Low Vision Devices

- Many people require more than one visual device. Some examples of devices are listed below:
  - Glasses.
  - Telescopic lenses.
  - Special software for computers.
  - Other devices.



## Low Vision Devices *(Continued)*

- Glasses with high-powered lenses





# Low Vision Devices *(Continued)*

- Telescopic lenses





# Low Vision Devices *(Continued)*

- Special software for computers





# Low Vision Devices *(Continued)*

- Other devices



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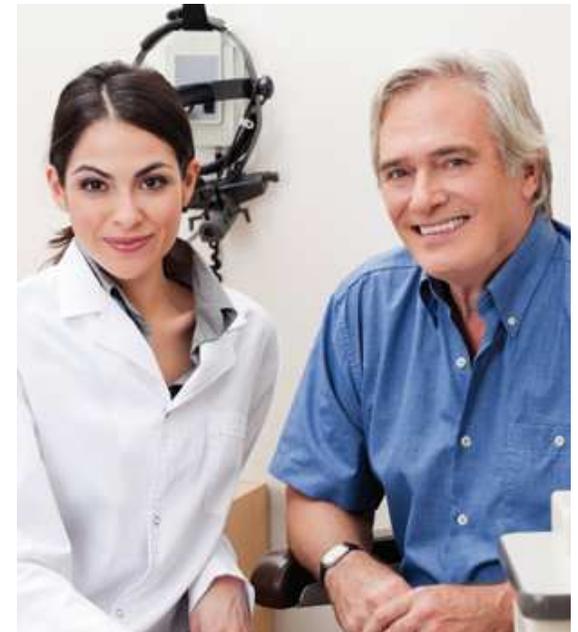


National Eye Institute, National Institutes of Health



## Be Your Best Health Advocate

- Investigate and learn as much as you can.
- Ask questions about vision rehabilitation, and ask for a referral for care or a resource for more information.





# Be Your Best Health Advocate

*(Continued)*

- Learn about low vision programs, devices, and technology.
- Get support from family and friends.
- Establish a good relationship with your eye care professional and specialist in low vision.



# Questions To Ask Your Eye Care Professional

- What changes can I expect in my vision?
- Will my vision loss get worse?
- How much of my vision will I lose?
- Will regular eyeglasses improve my vision?
- What can I do to protect my vision?



# Questions To Ask Your Eye Care Professional *(Continued)*

- Will diet, exercise, or lifestyle changes help?
- If my vision can't be corrected, can you refer me to a specialist in low vision?
- Where can I get a low vision assessment?
- Where can I get vision rehabilitation?



# Questions To Ask Your Specialist in Low Vision

- How can I continue my daily activities?
- Are there resources to help me in my job?
- Will any special devices help me with daily activities around the house?



# Questions To Ask Your Specialist in Low Vision *(Continued)*

- What training and services are available to help me live better and more safely?
- Where can I find support to cope with my vision loss?





## Review

- Low vision is vision that cannot be corrected.
- People with low vision can make the most of the vision they have.
- It pays to be proactive. Learn about vision rehabilitation services.
- Questions?



# Where To Get More Information

## National Eye Institute (NEI)

- Visit the Low Vision Web site:  
[www.nei.nih.gov/lowvision](http://www.nei.nih.gov/lowvision)
- Or call NEI at 301-496-5248

## Lions Clubs International

- Visit the Lions Clubs International Web site:  
[www.lionsclubs.org](http://www.lionsclubs.org)
- Or send an e-mail to: [programs@lionsclubs.org](mailto:programs@lionsclubs.org)