

Age-Related Eye Diseases and Conditions at a Glance

Disease or Condition	Description	Risk Information	Symptoms/Additional Information
Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gradually destroys the macula, the part of the eye that provides sharp, detailed, central vision needed for seeing objects clearly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The greatest risk factor is age. • Other risk factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Smoking. ○ Family history. ○ Race: Caucasians are more likely to lose vision from AMD. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no pain with AMD. • The earliest signs of AMD are drusen (yellow deposits under the retina seen by your eye care professional during a comprehensive dilated eye exam). • A symptom of late AMD is seeing straight lines that now appear crooked or blurred. • If you notice any sudden changes in your vision, see your eye care professional immediately.
Cataract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clouding of the eye's lens that causes loss of vision. • May grow larger over time and cloud more of the lens, making it harder to see. • Can occur in one or both eyes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most cataract are related to aging. • Other risk factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Diabetes. ○ Personal behaviors: smoking, alcohol use, or exposure to sunlight. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloudy or blurred vision. • Colors may not appear as bright as they once did. • Light from the sun lamps may appear to be too bright • At night, light from oncoming headlights causes more glare than is normal.
Diabetic Eye Disease (DED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A group of eye problems that people with diabetes may face as a complication of the disease. • DED includes diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, and cataract. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All people with diabetes (type 1, type 2, or gestational) are at risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often, there are no symptoms or pain in the early stages of the disease. • When the disease becomes more severe, blurred or blocked vision may occur. • If disease is detected early, timely treatment and follow-up care can reduce the risk of

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			<p>vision loss or blindness by up to 90 percent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Controlling blood glucose levels, blood pressure, and cholesterol can delay the onset of diabetic retinopathy.
Glaucoma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A group of eye diseases that can damage the optic nerve in the eye. Can develop in one or both eyes. If untreated, vision loss or blindness may occur. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African Americans over age 40. Everyone over the age of 60, especially Mexican Americans. People with a family history of glaucoma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At first, there are no symptoms or pain. As the disease progresses, a person with glaucoma may notice that it is difficult to see objects to the side while objects in front may still be seen clearly. Left untreated, straight-ahead vision may decrease until no vision remains.
Dry Eye	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occurs when the eye does not produce tears properly or when the tears evaporate too quickly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women suffer more often from dry eye, and it is more common after menopause. Dry eye can occur at any age and may be more common with use of certain medications. Older adults frequently experience dryness of the eyes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stinging or burning of the eye. Feeling as if sand or grit is in the eye. Episodes of excess tears following dry eye periods. A stringy discharge from the eye. Pain and redness of the eye. Episodes of blurred vision. Heavy eyelids. Inability to cry when emotionally stressed. Uncomfortable contact lenses. Decreased tolerance to reading, working on

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			<p>the computer, or any activity that requires prolonged visual attention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eye fatigue. • If you have dry eye there are some things you can do to help yourself. Talk to your eye care professional or pharmacist about best options. Visit an eye care professional if symptoms continue and to begin treatments to avoid permanent damage.
<p>Low Vision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A visual impairment that is not corrected by standard eyeglasses, contact lenses, medication, or surgery that interferes with the ability to perform everyday activities like reading, shopping, or watching TV. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults with eye diseases like age-related macular degeneration, cataract, glaucoma, and diabetic eye disease. • Normal age-related changes in eyes and vision usually don't lead to low vision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your eye care professional can tell the difference between normal changes and those caused by eye diseases. • Low vision rehabilitation services can offer information about devices and services to help people adapt to vision loss and maintain their independence.