

Senior Citizen Eye Diseases

As the eye ages, there are several serious eye conditions which may develop, including Cataracts, Glaucoma, Dry Eyes and Macular Degeneration. In addition, certain Eyelid Disorders are more likely to occur as one ages, and most people will develop Presbyopia (difficulty for near work) as they grow older. The following section describes these conditions and the symptoms that patients should watch for or ask their doctors.

Cataracts

Cataracts are the clouding of the eye's lens, like a window that is fogged with steam.

Symptoms include:

- Painless blurring of vision
- Sometimes Double vision in one eye
- Sensitivity to light and glare
- Poor night vision
- Fading of colors
- Frequent changes in glasses power

No medications, eye drops, exercises or glasses can cure cataracts and make it disappear. When cataracts begin to interfere with daily activities, they can be treated surgically.

Treatment of Cataracts

Cataract surgery is one of the most common surgeries done in the India — over 1.4 million people have cataract surgery every year, and in the hand of skilled surgeons, it is one of the most safe and effective surgeries available. A number of technological advances in the last 15 years have made the procedure faster and also have reduced recovery time. In addition, new lens implant options such as the Multifocal, Multifocal Toric, and accommodative lenses are available which provide a broader range of vision than the traditional single, or mono, focal lens. Please refer cataract page for more detail.

Glaucoma

Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of permanent blindness in India. It is a condition associated with elevated pressure inside the eye, which can damage the optic nerve and cause vision loss. More than 12 million Indians are thought to have glaucoma, although only half know they have it. This is because the vast majority of the time, there are no symptoms in the early stage of disease. For this reason, routine screening and immediate attention to any of the

following symptoms are imperative.

Possible Glaucoma symptoms include:

- Blurred Vision,
- Halos around lights,
- Loss of peripheral vision, and
- Difficulty focusing on objects.

Although glaucoma cannot be cured, early detection and treatment can usually preserve vision. At Shreeji Eye Clinic & Palak's Glaucoma Care Centre, we utilize the latest technologies to analyze the optic nerve and internal structures of the eye in order identify the presence of glaucoma. Although there is no cure for glaucoma, medication or laser surgery can slow or prevent future vision loss. Please see our Glaucoma section for more detail on this condition.

Macular Degeneration

Age-related macular degeneration is damage to the macula (a part of the retina in the eye) which results in central vision loss. Because peripheral vision remains good, the disease does not cause total blindness, however, it can make reading or close work difficult or impossible without the use of special low vision aids.

Macular Degeneration symptoms include:

- Straight lines appearing wavy
- Difficulty seeing at a distance
- Decreased ability to distinguish colors,
- Dark or empty spots in center of vision.

Sometimes only one eye loses vision, so it may be some time before a patient notices visual problems. Ophthalmologists can detect macular degeneration in the early stages through routine examinations and with ancillary tests, such as an Amsler grid test, a color vision test, and sometimes a fluroscein angiogram (FA). This tests helps identify any blood vessel abnormalities or leakages that might be present. Early detection is important because people may not notice vision impairment, and early diagnosis and treatment are now possible with a variety of therapies.

Treatment of Macular Degeneration

Studies to find effective treatments are ongoing, but, as always, early detection is the best

defense against losing vision. Good lifestyle habits decrease the chance of developing this disease; in particular being a non-smoker decreases the chances significantly. For some patients whose condition is detected early enough, medical therapies can be used that decrease the likelihood of any leaking from abnormal blood vessels. These therapies can be combined with laser therapies as needed.

Dry Eyes

Dry Eyes is a condition in which people do not produce enough tears to keep the eye comfortable. This condition is more common in 40 years above age group and in females.

Dry Eye symptoms include:

- stinging or burning eyes;
- scratchiness, eye irritation from smoke or wind;
- difficulty wearing contact lens; and
- Excess tearing (caused when the eye becomes so irritated from dryness that tearing occurs).

Tear production normally decreases significantly as we age, and can also be associated with arthritis. A variety of treatment options exist for dry eyes and we can tailor each treatment plan to each individual patient's needs.

Treatment options include:

Adding artificial tears: a mild case of dry eyes can usually be treated with over-the-counter artificial tears. Usually patients can use the lubricating drops as often as needed to provide relief, and we can recommend the drops that are best for each patient. Sometimes ointments are recommended for night use;

Managing lid problems: sometimes an eyelid condition, such as an anatomic abnormality or an incomplete blink can contribute to dry eyes, in which case eyelid surgery may be a good solution. In addition, if your eye lids are inflamed due to blepharitis, regular cleaning of the lash area may be required.

Conserving Tears: in order to keep your natural tears around longer, we may recommend partially or completely closing your tear ducts, which normally serve to drain tears away. Tear ducts can be plugged with tiny silicone plugs.

Cornea section covers a more detailed explanation of dry eyes.

Lid Disorders

Common eye lid problems include redundant or sagging lid tissue, outwardly turned eyelids (ectropion) and inwardly turned eyelids (entropion). All of these conditions are commonly associated with aging and all of these problems can be greatly improved through simple outpatient procedures. Please review our Eyelid Procedures Section for more details.

Presbyopia

As people approach middle age, usually in their 40s, they often begin to experience blurry vision at near tasks, such as reading, and find they may need to hold books or other reading materials at arms lengths to focus properly. This condition is called presbyopia and happens to everyone at some point in life, even people who have never had vision problems. Presbyopia is age-related processes which reduce the flexibility in the natural lens of the eye. These age-related changes occur within the proteins in the lens of the eye, making it harder and less elastic, and within the muscle fibers surrounding the lens, reducing elasticity.

Treatment Options

Treatment options include eyeglasses with bifocal or progressive addition lenses, multifocal contact lenses, monovision contact lenses and surgical procedures such as monovision LASIK. We will work with you to find the solution that best fits your needs. Please see our Presbyopia section for more details.

Even if you don't experience any of the symptoms associated with the conditions described above, the standard guideline suggests that that people over age 45 should have complete eye exams by their eye doctor every one to two years to test for these and other eye conditions. If you haven't been to see an eye doctor for over a year, please take appointment now by clicking [appointment page](#).

Your eye health is an important part of your overall wellness, and we are dedicated in providing the best possible eye care to patients, enabling them to lead healthier, more fulfilling lifestyles.