

What is low vision?

Low vision is when a person has reduced vision that cannot be compensated for using traditional eye glasses or contact lenses. If you have difficulty doing everyday tasks like reading, seeing the television, seeing street signs or seeing the print on a medicine bottle, you should have an eye exam and ask if you would benefit from a low vision evaluation. Low vision should not be confused with blindness.

Who typically has low vision?

Low vision can occur because of an inherited eye condition, after an eye injury, due to an age-related eye condition like macular degeneration or glaucoma or as a complication of a disease that affects the body like diabetes. Children may be born with low vision or develop low vision at a young age. Others who have had normal vision may develop an eye condition and their vision may become reduced. People are living longer and are at increased risk for age-related eye conditions and reduced vision. Whether inherited or acquired, an eye condition that affects any part of the eye can reduce vision.

How can people with low vision be helped?

Patients with low vision have useful vision which may be improved with a magnifying device. Low vision rehabilitation services do not cure the cause of the vision problem, but help maximize remaining vision.

We will discuss which everyday tasks are difficult for the patient because of her or his vision. This might include reading, seeing the computer, seeing street signs, traveling independently, kitchen tasks, money management, medication management or seeing outside when it is sunny. We will use different eye charts and check side vision, contrast sensitivity and blind spots.

We will also demonstrate different devices to help the patient do everyday tasks, including high powered reading glasses, magnifiers, telescopes, sunglasses, lamps, electronic devices and computer adaptations. We provide individualized care with an emphasis on visual function.

How can I purchase my low vision aid?

The University Eye Center team will make recommendations for low vision devices. After thorough evaluation, the devices will be ordered for you after a 50% deposit is received. The balance should be remitted at the time of pick-up.

Are my low vision devices covered by insurance?

Low vision aids are covered by straight Medicaid; Managed Medicaid does NOT cover low vision aids. Commercial insurances do NOT cover low vision aids. If you cannot afford your devices, a fee reduction program is available based on income eligibility. Please ask your doctor for an application.

What if I am sponsored by the New York State Commission for the Blind or another low vision agency?

Our Low Vision Team will submit a request to your referring agency for consideration of payment.

UNIVERSITYEYECENTER.ORG

33 WEST 42ND STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10036 | (888) 601-8811