

Glossary of terms

Ever wonder what a cataract is? How about astigmatism? These are common words used by your eye care professional, but do you know what they mean? Here's the place to find out.

age-related macular degeneration (MAK-yu-lur). Group of conditions that include deterioration of the macula, resulting in loss of sharp central vision. Most common cause of decreased vision after age 60.

amblyopia (am-blee-OH-pee-uh), "**lazy eye.**" Can't see clearly; most often happens to children

astigmatism (uh-STIG-muh-tiz-um). An eye condition with blurred vision as its main symptom. The cornea is not curved properly, usually one half is flatter than the other resulting in a blurred image. Astigmatism may also be caused by an irregularly shaped lens, which is located behind the cornea.

bifocals. Eyeglasses that incorporate two different powers in each lens, usually for near and distance corrections.

binocular vision. Blending of the separate images seen by each eye into one image.

blind spot. Sightless area within the visual field of a normal eye.

cataract. A clouding of the lens of the eye that makes it hard for people to see, cloudy eyesight, cloudy vision

central vision. An eye's best vision; used for reading and discriminating fine detail and color.

color blindness. Trouble seeing colors or the difference between certain colors

conjunctivitis (kun-junk-tih-VI-tis), "**pink eye.**" Pink eye, eye infection, swelling and redness around your eyes

cornea (KOR-nee-uh). The clear, outer layer of the eyeball

Corrective Lenses. Any type of eyeglasses or contact lenses that help you see better

dry eye syndrome. Dry eye is a condition in which there are not enough tears to keep the eye moist and healthy. Tears are necessary for maintaining the health of the front surface of the eye and for providing clear vision. People with dry eyes either do not produce enough tears or have a poor quality of tears.

glaucoma (glaw-KOH-muh). Eye disease, increased eye pressure, an eye disease that can lead to blindness

glaucoma test (glaw-KOH-muh). A test that looks for an eye disease called glaucoma. This disease causes a type of eye pressure that can lead to blindness.

hyperopia (hi-pur-OH-pee-uh), **farsightedness**. a vision condition in which distant objects are usually seen clearly, but close ones do not come into proper focus.

IOL (intraocular lens). Plastic lens that may be surgically placed to replace the eye's natural lens.

intraocular pressure. 1. Fluid pressure inside the eye. 2. The assessment of pressure inside the eye with a tonometer. Also called tension.

low vision. Term usually used to indicate vision of less than 20/200.

macula. Center part of the retina (back of the eye) that helps us see fine details and color

myopia (mi-OH-pee-uh), **nearsightedness**. A vision condition in which close objects are seen clearly, but objects farther away appear blurred.

ophthalmologist (ahf-thal-MAH-loh-jist). Doctor (MD) specializing in diagnosis and treatment of vision and medical problems related to eye diseases and disorders. Treatment can include spectacles, contact lenses, low vision aids, surgery and prescribing medication.

optic neuritis. Eye disease, disease of the eyes

optician (ahp-TISH-un). Professional who makes and adjusts optical aids, e.g., eyeglass lenses, from refraction prescriptions supplied by an ophthalmologist or optometrist.

optometrist (ahp-TAHM-uh-trist). Doctor (OD) specializing in diagnosis and treatment of vision and medical problems related to eye diseases and disorders. Treatment can include spectacles, contact lenses, low vision aids, vision therapy, and prescribing medication for eye diseases.

patching. Covering an amblyopic patient's preferred eye, to improve vision in the other eye.

peripheral vision. Side vision

refraction. Test to determine the best corrective lenses to be prescribed. Series of lenses in graded powers are presented to determine which provide sharpest, clearest vision.

retinopathy - Damage to the blood vessels in the eyes; could lead to loss of vision

slit lamp. Microscope used for examining the eye; allows the cornea, and other parts of the eye to be examined in detail to check overall health

trifocal (TRI-foh-kul). Eyeglass lens that combines three lenses of different powers. The main portion is usually focused for distance (20 ft.), the center segment for about 2 ft., and the lower segment for near (14 in.).

20/20. Normal visual acuity. Upper number is the standard distance (20 ft.) between an eye being tested and the eye chart; lower number indicates that the tested eye can see the same small standard-sized letters or symbols as a normal eye at 20 feet.

visual acuity. Assessment of the eye's ability to distinguish object details and shape, using the smallest identifiable object that can be seen at a specified distance (usually 20 ft. or 16 in.).

visual field. Full extent of the area visible to an eye that is fixating straight ahead.