



Share the Wellness Tip

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Vision Quest: Improving Life After Vision Loss

Reading. Cooking. Writing. Recognizing faces. Watching TV. Shopping. All of these daily tasks can be difficult, if not impossible, for someone with low vision.

Low vision describes a visual impairment that cannot be corrected by standard glasses, contact lenses, medicine or surgery. An estimated 14 million Americans have low vision.

Such vision loss is most common in people older than age 65, but it strikes younger people, too. Cataracts, glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration are to blame for many cases of low vision. Eye changes related to diabetes are another common cause.

People who have vision loss commonly experience depression, anxiety and confusion. But there are ways to manage with less vision. Many everyday items like books and magazines are available in large-print versions.

Adapting at home is important, too. For starters, look for ways to provide more contrast.

Some examples include:

- Dark-colored light switches and electrical outlets on light-colored walls
- Colored tape on the edges of steps
- Bright-colored fingernail polish, tape or colored dots to mark dials on microwaves, stoves and telephones
- Adjusting the lighting at home by adding lights that turn on automatically when you enter the room or extra-bright lamps that can aid reading and writing

Some people are at a higher risk for vision problems. Ask your doctor about your risks and how often you should have your eyes checked.

Sources: American Optometric Association; National Eye Institute

