



Low Vision

Low vision is a broad term for conditions resulting in reduced sight that cannot entirely be corrected with eyeglasses, contact lenses, medicines or surgery. It can affect central and/or peripheral vision. Many eye disorders can lead to low vision, including macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, and cataracts. Injury to the eye or to a portion of the brain involved in sight can also produce low vision.

It is estimated that as many as 14 million people suffer low vision. It is among the 10 most common causes of disability in the U.S.



A variety of products can help those with low vision maintain their independence.

Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB) is committed to stimulate, sustain and intensify a concerted research assault, with the goal of developing more effective treatments, preventives and cures for all diseases of the visual system that damage and destroy sight.

In the fight against vision loss, RPB-supported scientists and laboratories are:

- developing new pharmacological agents which promise to prevent and possibly restore visual loss from macular degeneration and glaucoma;
- perfecting telescopic magnifiers and experimental artificial retinal chips to restore visual loss;
- implementing therapies to retard the creation of cataracts while improving intra-ocular lenses and surgical procedures;
- identifying eye disease-related genes which may allow doctors to treat patients before symptoms become apparent; and
- evaluating nutritional therapies which may reduce the risk of diabetic eye disease, cataract and macular degeneration.

RPB is leading a successful research effort to preserve vision and restore sight. Since its inception in 1960, nearly every significant development in the treatment of blinding disorders has been supported by RPB.

To obtain a complete listing of research projects supported by RPB, visit **www.rpbusa.org**.

Important Resources

Managing low vision

American Academy of Ophthalmology
(415) 561 8500

Visit www.aao.org/smartsight and check "handout" or ask your doctor to provide you with a printout.

Low Vision Products

American Academy of Optometry
(301) 984-1441

www.allaboutvision.com/lowvision

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To save your sight...

- Learn your risk factors for various eye disorders and get regular eye exams.
- Reduce eye disease risk—quit smoking.
- Wear sunglasses that protect against UV and blue light to help prevent eye damage.
- Eat a diet high in dark, leafy and colorful vegetables and fruits; properly balance omega-3 essential fatty acids found in fish, nuts and seeds versus omega-6 essential fatty acids found in processed and baked foods; ask your eye doctor about nutritional supplements.
- Maintain good blood sugar control to delay or prevent vision loss from diabetic eye disease.

To manage low vision...

- Get a low vision evaluation (which is different from an ordinary eye exam) by a Low Vision Specialist. Your eye doctor can recommend a Low Vision Specialist, or you can search for local low vision services at www.afb.org, the American Foundation for the Blind.
- With your Low Vision Specialist, learn to utilize remaining vision to its fullest potential by investigating special eyewear, adaptive equipment such as speech recognition and computer navigation programs, special television systems and other independent living aids.
- Improve lighting and reduce glare in your home and surroundings.
- Increase the contrast in things you use daily (put coffee in a white cup; use a dark, fat-tipped pen, etc.).



Other Resources

Books & magazines on tape

American Printing House for the Blind
(800) 223 1839
www.aph.org



Large print materials

National Association for Visually Handicapped
(212) 889 3141
www.navh.org

Vision Rehabilitation

Department of Veterans Affairs
(202) 273 8481
www.va.gov/blindrehab/

American Foundation for the Blind
(800) 232 5463
www.afb.org

For a directory of agencies serving the vision disabled.

Invest in your vision

You can join RPB in supporting critical research in the fight against vision loss by sending your tax deductible donation to the address shown below or online at www.rpbusa.org. You may also call RPB at (800) 621-0026. A matching fund, created by RPB's founder, doubles contributions totaling up to one million dollars in any calendar year. *RPB is a public 501(c)(3) foundation.*



Research to Prevent Blindness www.rpbusa.org **1-800-621-0026**
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