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EYESIGHT PROBLEMS OF PEOPLE IN TODAY'S WORLD

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Annotation: The human eye is a sensory organ that reacts to light, allowing people to see. Many eye conditions can lead to vision complications. Some eye problems are minor and may go away on their own or are easily treatable. However, some eye disorders and diseases are more serious and can lead to blindness.

Key words: Loss of central vision, blurry or wavy areas in your central vision, drusen, comprehensive eye exam, optic nerve, cornea, amblyopia, diabetes, retina, floaters, amblyopia.

Refractive errors are the most frequent eye problems in the United States. Refractive errors include myopia (near-sightedness), hyperopia (farsightedness), astigmatism (distorted vision at all distances), and presbyopia that occurs between age 40–50 years (loss of the ability to focus up close, inability to read letters of the phone book, need to hold newspaper farther away to see clearly) can be corrected by eyeglasses, contact lenses, or in some cases surgery. The National Eye Institute states that proper refractive correction could improve vision among 150 million Americans.

Macular degeneration, often called age-related macular degeneration (AMD), is an eye disorder associated with aging and results in damaging sharp and central vision. Central vision is needed for seeing objects clearly and for common daily tasks such as reading and driving. AMD affects the macula, the central part the retina that allows the eye to see fine details.

Blurred vision (refractive errors)

Nearsightedness (called myopia) is when you can see clearly up close but blurry in the distance. Farsightedness (called hyperopia) is when you can see clearly in the distance but blurry up close. If you are older than 40 and have trouble reading small print or focusing up close, this is usually due to a condition called presbyopia. One in every three people 40 years or older in the U.S. will need glasses to read smaller print. Astigmatism is another condition that causes blurred vision, but it is because of the shape of the cornea. These conditions affect the shape of the eye and, in turn, how the eye sees. They can be corrected by eyeglasses, contact lenses, and in some cases surgery.

The reasons of this eye illness are family history – parent(s) who have one or more refractive errors and advancing age - presbyopia affects most adults over age 35.

Crossed Eyes (strabismus)

Strabismus occurs when the eyes do not line up or they are crossed. One eye, however, usually remains straight at any given time. Common forms of strabismus include:

1. Esotropia – one or both eyes turn inward toward the nose
2. Exotropia – one or both eyes turn out; also called wall-eyed
3. Hypertropia – one or both eyes turn up
4. Hypotropia – one or both eyes turn down

If detected early in life, strabismus can be treated and even reversed.

If left untreated strabismus can cause amblyopia.

Risk factors of this illness are family history of strabismus and having a significant amount of uncorrected farsightedness (hyperopia) and disabilities such as Daun syndrome and cerebral palsy and stroke or head injury.

Lazy Eye (amblyopia)

Amblyopia — often called lazy eye — is a problem that is common in children. It is a result of the brain and the eyes not working together. The brain ignores visual information from one eye, which

causes problems with vision development.Treatment for it works well if the condition is found early. If untreated, amblyopia causes permanent vision loss.

Diabetic Retinopathy (DR)

All people with diabetes, both type 1 and type 2, are at risk for DR. It is caused by damage to blood vessels in the back of the eye (retina). The longer someone has diabetes, the more likely he or she will get DR.

People with this condition may not notice any changes to their vision until the damage to the eyes is severe. This is why it is so important for people with diabetes to have a comprehensive eye exam every year.

There are four stages of DR. During the first three stages of DR, treatment is usually not needed. To prevent progression of diabetic retinopathy, people with diabetes should control their levels of blood sugar, blood pressure, and blood cholesterol. For the fourth stage of DR, called proliferative retinopathy, there are treatments that reduce vision loss, but are not a cure for DR.

Warning signs of diabetic retinopathy includes blurred vision, gradual vision loss, floaters, shadows or missing areas of vision, and difficulty seeing at nighttime.

People with diabetes are at greater risk for cataract and glaucoma as well.

Glaucoma

There are different types of glaucoma, but all of them cause vision loss by damaging the optic nerve. Glaucoma is called the “sneak thief of sight” because people don’t usually notice a problem until some vision is lost.

The most common type of glaucoma happens because of slowly increasing fluid pressure inside the eyes.

Vision loss from glaucoma cannot be corrected. But if it is found early, vision loss can be slowed or stopped.A comprehensive eye exam is important so glaucoma can be found early.

Risk factors of glaucoma are people over age 40 and everyone over age 60, especially Mexican Americans and those with a family history of glaucoma.

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