

# Retiring With Good Vision

## Changes in vision

As the years pass by, the lens inside our eye thickens and slowly loses its flexibility. Consequently our ability to change focus from distance to near is reduced. This condition is called presbyopia and the classic example is having to hold a newspaper at arms length to be able to read it. The pupil which lets in the light becomes smaller, so by sixty you need about three times more light to see as well as you did at twenty.

## Lighting

Good lighting becomes more important as you get older. Natural daylight is the most powerful source of light, but no amount of artificial light will harm the eye. You might get a headache from straining to see in poor light, but it won't do you any permanent harm. A single bulb in the centre of the room helps you move around, but for reading, writing, sewing etc, it is better to use an adjustable reading lamp or table lamp, directing the light at the task and not towards your eyes.

## Keeping a check on your eyes

An eye examination which should normally take between 20 and 30 minutes is an essential part of preventative healthcare ensuring healthy eyes and best possible vision throughout life. As of 1st April 1999 all eye examinations for patients aged 60 years and over are free of charge. Your eyes will be examined thoroughly inside and out by your optometrist or ophthalmic medical practitioner. As well as eye diseases, signs of other health problems such as high blood pressure and diabetes can be seen. If detected early enough, all of these conditions can be treated and managed effectively. It is therefore a sensible precaution to have a full eye examination every two years.

## Your lifestyle

If you drive, you need to ensure that you can read a car number plate at a distance of 67ft (20.5 metres) in good daylight and you have adequate peripheral vision. There are no known ways yet to prevent many of the naturally occurring changes that we all get as time passes, but there is no reason why they should interfere with your enjoyment of life.

- Try contact lenses, bifocal or multifocal.
- Choose a new frame. Many modern styles are much smaller and not only do they look good but they are also much lighter. Your dispensing

The Eyecare Trust is a registered charity that exists to promote awareness of all aspects of eye health. For more information call our public information line on 0845 129 5001 or log on to [www.eyecaretrust.org.uk](http://www.eyecaretrust.org.uk)



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optician will advise you.

- For higher prescriptions, try the new thinner, flatter lenses.
- A slight tint or ultra violet filter may often make the vision more comfortable and reduce the effects of some conditions.
- An anti-reflective coating on your lenses will help your visual comfort by reducing reflections and the glare of bright lights. Modern technology can help to make the most of your sight. Ask your practitioner for advice.

# Factsheet

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