



Your Eyes



TODAY

In This Issue

**Spotlight
on
Sunglasses:
3**

**Cataract
Awareness
Month: 4**

**Living with
Low Vision: 6**

**Magnifying
with
Technology:
7**

Low Vision Town Hall Meetings Continue

POB has held Town Hall Call-In Meetings focusing on low vision topics, resources/tips, and staying connected during these challenging times. Moderated by Dr. Suleiman Alibhai and Dr. Belinda Weinberg, low vision specialists, POB is excited to continue Town Hall calls on a monthly basis through the summer. Bring your questions, concerns, and tips to share and let's continue bringing together the low vision community. **Meeting dates for June, July, and August can be found on the next page.** Call (301) 307-2252 (no PIN required) to join, hear about low vision topics and services, and ask questions.

(Continued on page 2)

SUMMER 2020

**Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington®
415 2nd Street NE, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20002**

(202) 234-1010 | www.youreyes.org | Facebook & Twitter: @youreyesdc

News & Updates

Low Vision Town Hall Meetings Continue

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

Wednesday, June 17, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Wednesday, July 22, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Wednesday, August 19, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

We want to hear from you! Call the Low Vision Learning Center at (301) 951-4444 or email events@youreyes.org with any topic suggestions, questions, or comments you have about the Low Vision Town Hall Call-In Meetings.

Recordings of previous Town Hall meetings are available online at youreyes.org.

Use these helpful tips to make your experience on the Low Vision Town Hall Call-In Meeting an enjoyable one:

- **All participants are initially muted (to reduce background noise). To un-mute yourself on the call, dial * * (**STAR STAR**) (also referred to as the Asterisk key) on your keypad.**
- **The meeting software uses audible alerts to indicate that the participant is muted or un-muted.**
- **Some phones have self-mute options. This option will not un-mute yourself from the call, so please refrain from using this option. Only **STAR STAR** will un-mute yourself.**

News & Updates

Spotlight on Sunglasses

Wearing the right sunglasses is a great defense against ultraviolet (UV) rays that can cause short- and long-term eye damage, according to the American Academy of Ophthalmology. Here are the most important factors to consider when purchasing sunglasses:

- 1. Make it 100%:** The most important thing to look for is an indicator that they block 100 percent of UV rays.
- 2. Bigger is better:** Consider buying oversized glasses or wraparound-style glasses, which help cut down on UV entering the eye from the side.
- 3. Cost shouldn't be a factor:** Less expensive pairs marked as 100% UV-blocking can be just as effective as pricier options.
- 4. Darker lenses don't protect better:** While very dark lenses may look cool, they do not necessarily block more UV rays.
- 5. Polarized lenses cut glare, not UV:** Polarization reduces glare coming off reflective surfaces like water or pavement. This does not offer more protection from the sun, but can make activities like driving safer or more enjoyable.

For more information, including more tips for sun smart eye health, visit eyesmart.org or call (301) 951-4444.

News & Updates

June is Cataract Awareness Month

The American Academy of Ophthalmology observes June as Cataract Awareness Month. Approximately 25 million Americans have cataracts, which causes cloudy, blurry or dim vision and often develops with advancing age.

As everyone grows older, the lenses of their eyes thicken and become cloudier. Eventually, they may find it more difficult to read street signs. These symptoms may signal cataracts, which affect about 70% of people by age 75.

Fortunately, cataracts can be corrected with surgery. Ophthalmologists perform around three million cataract surgeries each year to restore vision to those patients.

You can take steps to protect your eyes and delay cataracts.

- Wear sunglasses and a hat with a brim to block the sun.
- Quit smoking. If you're ready to quit, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) for free support.
- Eat healthy. Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables — especially dark, leafy greens like spinach, kale, and collard greens.
- Get a dilated eye exam. If you're age 60 or older, get a dilated eye exam at least once every two years.

News & Updates

June is Cataract Awareness Month

Age isn't the only risk factor for cataracts. Recent studies show that lifestyle and behavior can influence when and how severely you develop cataracts. Diabetes, extensive exposure to sunlight, smoking, obesity, and high blood pressure have all been linked to increased risk of cataracts.

Cataracts cannot be prevented, but you can lower your risk. Several studies suggest that eating more vitamin C-rich foods may delay how fast cataracts form. Vitamin C is found almost exclusively in fruits and vegetables, including citrus fruits such as oranges, lemons, grapefruit and limes. Vitamin C is also found in spinach and tomatoes.

Surgery may help improve more than just your vision. During the procedure, the natural clouded lens is replaced with an artificial lens called an intraocular lens, which should improve your vision significantly. Studies have shown that cataract surgery can improve quality of life and reduce the risk of falling.

Learn more about cataract symptoms and treatment at eyesmart.org or call (301) 951-4444.

Living with Low Vision

My First Magnifier

By Tara Aziz

“Draw the gastrointestinal track of the rabbit.”

“What do you see inside the cockroach?”

Questions like these and others, like solving the math problem written in small print on the blackboard or reading a textbook passage in front of the class, were impossible situations that accompanied me throughout my school years in the land between two rivers (Iraq). Special education and accommodation were alien concepts.

I was introduced to the wonders of a 3x handheld magnifier in elementary school when a family friend brought one back for me from the United Kingdom. I had a love-hate relationship with it: could not do without it, and did not want to be seen with it. How embarrassing it was to hold it in front of other kids. However, in order to read and excel in my studies, my magnifier became my “fifth eye” and hasn’t left me since.

Little had I known then that few decades later I would be working in a place full of handheld, stand, and video magnifiers, and proudly show clients their wonders!

Call the Low Vision Resource and Information Hotline at **(301) 951-4444** to learn about magnifiers and more.

Taming Technology

Magnifying with Technology

By Nitesh Rathod

Each one of us may have used a magnifier of some kind in our vision loss journey. One place you may not have known there are magnifiers -computers and smartphones!

These devices have versatile magnifiers with many integrated or third-party applications (apps). Features like flashlight support (lighting), zoom control (modify the level of magnification with your finger or mouse), focus and stabilizing features, and color modifications come pre-installed on many devices and are extremely useful to tailor these magnifiers to our needs.

There are also downloadable apps that make our smartphones into handheld telescopes with magnification at distance. Experiment with these features and learn and practice shortcuts to get the most out of your devices.

Have fun learning these features, adding to your magnification toolkit!

Call the Low Vision Resource and Information Hotline at (301) 951-4444 to learn more about this technology.

The Low Vision Perspective

New to Your Eyes Today: Two new columns written by our Low Vision Learning Center's vision rehabilitation resource specialists. **Taming Technology** by Nitesh Rathod and **Living with Low Vision** by Tara Aziz will cover various topics on technology and living with vision loss from two living with low vision in our community.

Some columns will be published in this newsletter, while others will be available online. To start receiving the **Low Vision Perspective** by email (and are not on already our email list), call the Low Vision Resource and Information Hotline at (301) 951-4444.

To also start receiving the digital edition of this newsletter, please send an email to communications@youreyes.org.

FREE MATTER
For the Blind or
Handicapped

Prevention of Blindness Society
of Metropolitan Washington®
415 2nd Street NE, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20002
Return Service Requested

