



Your Eyes



TODAY

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Diabetic Eye Disease Awareness Month

Diabetes leads to all sorts of negative health complications – from heart disease to permanent nerve damage. Another consequence of diabetes many are not aware of is vision loss. Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness among working-age Americans. It increases the risk of developing cataracts and glaucoma, and causes diabetic retinopathy, a debilitating vision disorder. November is National Diabetic Eye Disease Awareness Month, sponsored by the National Eye Institute. Diabetes is increasing steadily in America, and with this comes increasing rates of diabetic retinopathy, among

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**Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington®
233 Massachusetts Ave., NE, Washington, DC 20002**

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

News & Updates

Diabetic Eye Disease Awareness Month

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other vision disorders. If you are a diabetic (Type-I or -II), your risk increases over time. Keeping diabetes in control is key to slowing the progression of vision complications like diabetic retinopathy. There are important steps people with diabetes can take to keep their health on **TRACK**:

- Take your medications as prescribed by your doctor.
- Reach and maintain a healthy weight.
- Add physical activity to your daily routine.
- Control your ABC's—A1C, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels.
- Kick the smoking habit.

Early detection, timely treatment, and appropriate follow-up care can reduce a person's risk for severe vision loss from diabetic eye disease by 95 percent. People with diabetes should have a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once a year to help protect their sight.

For more information, visit www.nei.nih.gov/diabetes or call (301) 496-5248.

News & Updates

Thanksgiving: A Time to Talk with Family

Thanksgiving is a celebration of togetherness, family, and thankfulness. This strikes a wonderful time to discuss your vision loss properly with family and friends. Vision loss is very difficult and may make you feel isolated at first from family. It is important to remember that they love you and care about you. They may, however, be confused over how to help, if you want help, or what they are supposed to or not supposed to say. Oftentimes family want to do too much, which could be a bother for both parties involved.

It is important to communicate to them how you feel, what you still can do, and what you can not do at this point. This provides clarity to everyone about what assistance you would appreciate from a more than willing loved one, and tasks you want to do (or learn to do) on your own.

Some things to include:

- Which tasks can you still do independently?
- Which tasks can you do independently, but with difficulty?
- Which tasks require some assistance?
- Which tasks are you no longer able to do?

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Q&A with Dr. Weinberg

What is low vision? Who is most likely to have low vision?

The primary causes of vision impairment in the U.S. are age-related eye diseases. This includes macular degeneration, which is the leading cause of severe vision loss in older adults, as well as glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, and cataracts. There are also inherited eye diseases that can cause vision loss earlier in life, including ocular retinitis pigmentosa and Stargardt macular dystrophy, to name a few.

While these conditions make up a smaller proportion of those with visual impairment, the aging population is growing. According to the Administration on Aging, in 2009 there were nearly 40 million aging Americans, or approximately 13% of the population. By 2030, this is expected to grow to nearly 20% of the population. As such, Americans with age-related eye disease and resulting vision impairment is expected to double in the next three decades.

With most age-related eye diseases, vision loss can be prevented if they are detected early. Therefore, it is important to have a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once a year. To schedule an appointment with Dr. Weinberg, call (703) 652-7803. For more information, visit youreyes.org.

(Belinda Weinberg, OD, is a low vision specialist. Send questions to communications@youreyes.org. We regret that unpublished questions cannot be answered individually.)

Calendar of Events

FREE local programs!

NOVEMBER 2018

**TUE
13**

Diabetic Eye Disease Awareness Month

11:00 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. • Low Vision Support Group

Guest Speaker: George Skopis, MD, Washington

National Eye Center Ophthalmology Resident

People with diabetes are more likely to develop blinding eye diseases, such as diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, and cataracts. Join Dr. Skopis to learn what steps you can take to protect your vision!

MedStar Washington Hospital Center

Eye Center Conference Room, Suite 1A-19

110 Irving Street, NW, Washington, DC

To register, call (202) 234-1010.

**WED
14**

Metropolitan Washington Ear (MWE)

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. • Low Vision Support Group

Listen to a human voice read the Washington Post and more each day on a simple, low-tech radio.

This free service is available for people who can no longer read the newspaper. Learn about eligibility and application.

Vinson Hall Retirement Community

(Conference Room Near the Library)

6251 Old Dominion Drive, McLean, VA

For more information, call Sandy at (703) 989-1821.

NOVEMBER 2018 (continued)

**THU
15**

Low Vision Share Group

**12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. • POB Signature Share Group
Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan
Washington Headquarters
233 Massachusetts Ave., NE, Washington, DC
To register, call (202) 234-1010.**

**MON
19**

Using Your Cell Phone (and More) with Low Vision

**1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. • Tech Talk Mondays
Speaker: Patrick Timony, Adaptive Technology
Librarian, DC Public Library
Join us for a discussion about how to make
technology, such as cell phones, adaptive for people
with low vision. Bring your questions (and devices)!
Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan
Washington Headquarters
233 Massachusetts Ave., NE, Washington, DC
To register, call (202) 234-1010.**

**WED
21**

Metropolitan Washington Ear (MWE)

3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. • Low Vision Support Group

Listen to a human voice read the Washington Post and more each day on a simple, low-tech radio. This free service is available for people who can no longer read the newspaper. Learn about eligibility and application.

The Virginian Retirement Community

9229 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax, VA

For more information, call Sandy at (703) 989-1821.

News & Updates

Thanksgiving: A Time to Talk with Family

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In addition, it is important to discuss how you have been coping with new vision loss – do not be afraid to discuss your fears and feelings. They know you want to maintain as much independence as possible, even if it requires some equipment or minor assistance. Also encourage your family to discuss their individual concerns. While this discussion may be difficult, it is better to have an understanding from both sides so your transition goes smoothly, and you are able to live an independent and healthy life with your loved ones!

DESCRIBED ART TOURS IN NOVEMBER

POB is proud to partner with local museums offering art tours for visitors who are blind or have low vision.

America InSight (Smithsonian American Art Museum)

Sun., Nov. 11 at 1:30 p.m. & Thurs., Nov. 15 at 3:30 p.m.

For more: AmericanArtTours@si.edu or (202) 633-8550

Picture This! (National Gallery of Art)

Sat., Nov. 24 & Wed., Nov. 28, 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

For more: access@nga.gov or (202) 842-6905

Portrait InSight (Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery)

Thurs., Nov. 15, 2:00 p.m. & Sat., Nov. 17, 12:00 p.m.

For more: NPGAccess@si.edu or (202) 633-8506

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please send an email to communications@youreyes.org.**

Return Service Requested



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**FREE MATTER
For the Blind or
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