



# Your Eyes



**TODAY**

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## **Healthy Vision Month**

May is Healthy Vision Month, and the National Eye Institute (NEI), National Institutes of Health (NIH), is shining a spotlight on the connection between your eye health and overall health. Learn more about protecting your vision - now and in the future.

Set yourself up for a lifetime of seeing your best with these tips:

- 1. Find an eye doctor you trust.**  
Many eye diseases do not have early symptoms, so you may have a problem and not know it. Eye exams can catch these problems early and prevent needless loss of sight.

(Continued on page 2)

**MAY 2021**

**Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington®  
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**(202) 234-1010 | [www.youreyes.org](http://www.youreyes.org) | Facebook & Twitter: @youreyesdc**

# News & Updates

## Healthy Vision Month

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(Continued from page 1)

**2. Ask how often you need a dilated eye exam.**

Your eye doctor will decide how often you need an exam based on your risk for eye diseases.

**3. Add more physical activity to your day.**

Movement can lower your risk for health conditions that can affect your vision, like diabetes. Going for regular walks is a great start!

**4. If you smoke, make a plan to quit.**

Quitting smoking can lower your chances of developing eye diseases like macular degeneration, cataracts, and more! Call **1-800-QUIT-NOW** for free support.

**5. Stay on top of long-term health conditions.**

Diabetes and high blood pressure can increase your risk for some eye diseases, like glaucoma. If you have conditions such as diabetes or high blood pressure, ask your doctor about steps you can take to manage your condition and lower your risk of vision loss.

To learn more, speak to your doctor, or visit NEI's website at <http://nei.nih.gov>.

# News & Updates

## Low Vision Town Hall Call-In Meeting

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Join our moderator, Suleiman Alibhai, O.D., and hear from the experts at the National Eye Institute's National Eye Health Education Program (NEHEP) to learn what those with low vision can do to preserve sight. NEHEP, established by Congress in 1988, prevents vision loss by educating Americans about eye health.

### Special Guests:

**Julia Rosdahl, M.D., Ph.D.** - Glaucoma Specialist and Ophthalmologist at Duke Health, and NEHEP Chair

**Mark Wilkinson, O.D.** - Low Vision Specialist and Optometrist at University of Iowa Health Care, and NEHEP Low Vision Committee Chair

To join, call **(301) 307-2252** on **Wednesday, May 19**, at **11 a.m.** Bring your questions! POB will post a recording after the event at **[youreyes.org](http://youreyes.org)**.

You can now ask Alexa (on an enabled Amazon Echo device) to play recordings of previous Town Hall events. Say: "**Alexa, play Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington podcast.**" Try it! Learn more about Amazon Alexa on page 7.

# Calendar of Events

**MAY 2021**

To register for an event, call (301) 951-4444  
at least 24 hours prior to the event.

**TUE  
11**

## **Healthy Vision Month**

**11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. • Low Vision Support Group**  
**Speaker: Natalia Diaz, M.D., Washington National Eye Center Ophthalmology Resident**

Millions of Americans have an eye disease that may lead to blindness or low vision. There is a lot you can do to prevent this. Bring your questions!

Hosted by **MedStar Washington Hospital Center**  
To register, call (301) 951-4444.

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**TUE  
11**

## **Virtual Happy Hour**

**6 p.m. – 7 p.m. • Stargardt's Network**

All are welcome, regardless of eye condition!

To register, call (301) 951-4444.

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**TUE  
18**

## **Using Your PC: More Helpful Tips**

**1 p.m. – 2 p.m. • Tech Talk Tuesday with Nitesh**

Join Nitesh Rathod, Vision Resource Rehabilitation Specialist, to "talk technology!" It is recommended to join via computer with video-enabled.

To register, call (301) 951-4444.

Visit [youreyes.org/events](http://youreyes.org/events) or call (301) 951-4444 for additional events and information.

**WED  
19**

**Low Vision Town Hall Call-In Meeting**

**11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. • Special Event**

Join our moderator, Suleiman Alibhai, O.D., and hear from the experts at the National Eye Institute's National Eye Health Education Program (NEHEP) to learn what those with low vision can do to preserve sight. See page 3 for additional details.

Join by phone: (301) 307-2252

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**THU  
20**

**Low Vision Interest Group**

**1:00 p.m. • Ingleside at Rock Creek**

Residents at Ingleside at Rock Creek and nearby communities are welcome to attend!

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**FRI  
21**

**Virginia Department for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI) Update**

**1 p.m. • Beatley Library Low Vision Support Group**

Learn from Alexander Castillo, rehabilitation teacher, who will detail what is available from DBVI!

To register, call (301) 951-4444.

# Living with Low Vision

## Preserving Important Photos

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By Tara Aziz

As we celebrate more milestones, we accumulate more photos. No matter how carefully you handle and store your photos, time and age will eventually cause them to fade and deteriorate. There are several ways to preserve these irreplaceable possessions so that you can cherish your special moments for a lifetime.

The easiest way is to take out our dusty shoeboxes and digitize our old photos. I prefer using my smartphone or iPad – after I find the right surface and lighting, I take a picture of my photo and edit it by adding contrast or other adjustments. This allows me to make the image easier to see! I also add a caption. The magnification feature (or an app like Seeing AI or VoiceOver) can help you see the image more clearly, so you can add a description.

Other ways to digitize photos include using a scanner and uploading to your computer (doing this with your child or grandchild can be a fun activity!). There are also companies that scan, organize, and label photos for you, if you prefer.

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

# Taming Technology

## The "Amazing" Amazon Alexa

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By Nitesh Rathod

Amazon's Alexa is a voice assistant technology. It is built-in on Amazon devices and as an app for phones, tablets, and computers. Alexa can help complete many tasks with no need to 'see' displays or control panels.

Alexa allows you to make calls, send texts, and send voice messages. You can also voice-control music, podcasts, audiobooks, and streaming services on your device. Alexa can even help you keep a shopping list!

There are plenty of "smart home" devices, too. You can control lights, thermostats, ovens, microwaves, and more with Alexa (additional equipment may be required).

You can even ask Alexa to play recordings of POB events. Say: "Alexa, play Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington podcast."

There are many more things Alexa can do. However, you may need assistance getting everything set up. Luckily, there are people who can do this!

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

# Free Low Vision Resource Guide

**"Your Eyes and Low Vision" contains hundreds of resources and services helpful for those with vision loss - many of which are free. POB has compiled our area's resources into one comprehensive guide. With over 100 pages of resources and services, this guide has something for everyone, including a section featuring services specifically for parents of children with vision loss.**

**"Your Eyes and Low Vision" is available in a large-print book format AND on our accessible website, [youreyes.org](http://youreyes.org), under the "Resources" tab.**

**To receive a free large-print resource guide by mail, call the POB Low Vision Learning Center at (301) 951-4444.**

**To also start receiving the digital edition of this newsletter, please send an email to [communications@youreyes.org](mailto:communications@youreyes.org).**

**FREE MATTER  
For the Blind or  
Handicapped**

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of Metropolitan Washington®  
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Return Service Requested**

