



Your Eyes

MARCH 2025



TODAY

Understanding Dry Eye

Dry eye happens when your eyes don't make enough tears to stay wet or when your tears don't work correctly. This can make your eyes feel uncomfortable and, in some cases, cause vision problems. It affects more than 16 million Americans every year.

Dry eye can cause a scratchy feeling, like there's something in your eye, stinging or burning feelings in your eye, red eyes, sensitivity to light, and blurry vision.

Anyone can get dry eye, but you might be more likely to have it if you are 50 or older, female, wear contact lenses, don't get enough vitamin A or omega-3 fatty acids, or have certain autoimmune conditions, like lupus or Sjögren syndrome.

Your eye doctor can check for dry eye as part of a comprehensive dilated eye exam. The good news is that if you have dry eye, you can do many things to keep your eyes healthy and stay comfortable.

(Continued on page 2)

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

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

Understanding Dry Eye

(Continued from page 1)

Over-the-counter eye drops: The most common treatment for mild dry eye is a type of eye drops called artificial tears. You can get these eye drops without a prescription. Some over-the-counter moisturizing gels and ointments may help your eyes feel better. Check with your doctor's office before taking any over-the-counter medications.

Lifestyle changes: If something in your life or your environment is causing your dry eye, or making it worse, your doctor may suggest changes to help protect your eyes.

- Try to avoid smoke, wind, and air conditioning.
- Use a humidifier to keep the air in your home from getting too dry.
- Limit screen time and take breaks from staring at screens.
- Wear wraparound sunglasses when you're outside.
- Drink plenty of water — try for 8 to 10 glasses every day.
- Get enough sleep — about 7 to 8 hours a night.

Talk over your options with your doctor. If another health condition is causing your dry eye, treating that condition may improve your dry eye symptoms.

For more information, speak to your eye doctor. Call the POB Low Vision Resource and Information Hotline at **(301) 951-4444** to speak with a Resource Navigator.

National Cherry Blossom Festival

The National Cherry Blossom Festival is one of the world's premier spring celebrations, brimming with food, fun, art, and culture in honor of the iconic cherry blossoms. The Festival commemorates the 1912 gift of 3,000 cherry trees from Tokyo's Mayor Yukio Ozaki to Washington, D.C.

The 2025 National Cherry Blossom Festival is March 20 – April 13. Cherry blossom trees grow around the Tidal Basin in West Potomac Park, East Potomac Park (Hains Point), and the Washington Monument grounds. In addition to the cherry blossoms, the National Mall and Memorial Parks are a botanical showcase with over 20,000 trees and thousands of flowers, shrubs, and water plants.

Are you a budding flower or tree enthusiast? Here are a few tips to enhance your Festival experience:

Take a Free Ranger-Led Tour: Join a National Parks Service Park Ranger to discover the history and lore of the cherry blossoms. Tours meet in front of the Jefferson Memorial.

Identify Plants with Your iPhone or iPad: To identify plants using Visual Look Up, select a photo and tap the Info button. Then, tap Look Up, and you'll see results from the web.

Avoid the Crowds: Visit early in the morning, late afternoon, or during the week for a quieter experience.

For more information, call (877) 442-5666, visit nationalcherryblossomfestival.org, or visit nps.gov.

Calendar of Events

MARCH 2025

To register for an event, call (301) 951-4444.

**FRI
7**

POB READS Book Club (Virtual Event)

11 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Join us in March for **Love at First Book** by Jenn McKinlay, a charming tale of romance, books, and unexpected connections. To register, call (301) 951-4444 or visit pobreads.org.

**TUE
11**

Healthy Aging & Your Eyes (Virtual Event)

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. • Low Vision Support Group

Join **Jessica Lee, M.D., Washington National Eye Center Ophthalmology Resident**, to learn about common eye challenges like dry eye and cataracts, detecting eye emergencies, and what you need to know before your dilated eye exam.

Hosted by **Washington National Eye Center**.

**TUE
11**

Experiencing Art and Culture (Virtual Event)

6 p.m. – 7 p.m. • Stargardt's Network

Share your favorite local art and cultural activities!
Hosted by **Prevention of Blindness Society**.

MARCH 2025 (continued)

**WED
12**

"I am Visually Impaired, Not Helpless!"

2 p.m. – 3 p.m. • Leisure World Lions Group

Join us for a conversation on how friends and family can be supportive without being overbearing. We'll discuss sighted guiding, maintaining privacy, and self-advocacy. To RSVP, call Larry at (908) 770-9111.

Leisure World Clubhouse II Edmondson Room
3300 N Leisure World Blvd., Silver Spring, MD

**TUE
18**

iPad Accessibility Features (Virtual Event)

1 p.m. – 2 p.m. • Tech Talk Tuesdays

Speaker: Steven Kelley, Learning Expert, Hadley

Join us to discuss Apple iPad accessibility features that are helpful for people with vision impairment.

**WED
19**

Traveling with Vision Impairment

Low Vision Town Hall (Virtual Event)

11 a.m. – 12 p.m. • Special Event

Speaker: Stan Gowin, Co-Chair, Reston V.I.P. Group

Join Stan as he shares his travel experiences navigating planes, trains, and ships with a mobility cane. Learn tips for overcoming travel challenges with vision impairment and discover how to make travel more accessible. Call (301) 951-4444 to register.

(Additional events on next page)

MARCH 2025 (continued)

**THU
20**

Exploring Innovative Smartphone Apps

11 a.m. – 12 p.m. • Vision Resource Group

Join Sandy Neuzil for an insightful discussion on cutting-edge smartphone app that blend human and artificial intelligence (AI) to provide valuable support for individuals with vision impairments.

To RSVP, call (301) 656-2797.

Friendship Heights Village Center

4433 South Park Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD

APRIL 2025

**WED
2**

America InSight: Verbal Description Art Tour

11 a.m. – 12 p.m. • Special Event

Join POB for an in-person docent-led tour for visitors who are blind or have low vision. Through rich verbal description and sensory experience, discover highlights from the Smithsonian's collection.

To RSVP, call (301) 951-4444.

Smithsonian American Art Museum

8th and G Streets, NW, Washington, DC



Listen and watch replays of recent webinars and events, including POB Low Vision Town Hall events and Tech Talk events, at: www.youreyes.org/replays

Living with Vision Loss

Declutter Your Home for Spring

By Tara Aziz

Spring has arrived, and it's time to lighten up our wardrobes and homes! Swap winter coats for light jackets, and refresh your space by decluttering. Letting go of possessions can be challenging, especially those with sentimental value, but think about how much they could help someone in need. That old jacket? It could fund an eye exam and give someone the gift of sight! You can make a difference!

Decluttering doesn't have to be overwhelming—start small, with one drawer or shelf at a time. Your space will feel refreshed, and your donation to POB's **Look Again® Resale Shops** in Alexandria, Virginia, and Kensington, Maryland, will support our vital, community-based programs.

900 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 | (703) 683-2558

3716 Howard Ave., Kensington, MD 20895 | (301) 942-4707

Our shops accept donations of gently used household and clothing items. Our shoppers love classic home decor, small antique and vintage furniture, brand-name clothing, gold and sterling jewelry, dinnerware, and artwork.

For more information about POB's Look Again Resale Shops, visit www.youreyes.org/resaleshops.

Save the Date!

Saturday, May 3 – Being the Light: Friends and Family Connection Event

You, your friends, and your family are invited to join us for a luncheon panel discussion moderated by **Suleiman Alibhai, O.D.**, a low-vision specialist. We are excited to bring this program to Prince George's County, Maryland! Additional details and tickets will be available soon.

Collington Life Care Community

10450 Lottsford Road, Mitchellville, MD 20721

To also start receiving an electronic copy of this newsletter, please email communications@youreyes.org.

FREE MATTER
For the Blind or
Handicapped

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