

The Cost

The annual economic cost of vision loss in Australia is estimated to be over \$16 billion. The personal and social costs are even greater. Research has found that people with vision loss are at an increased risk of falls, hip fractures, depression, social dependence and early admission into nursing homes.

It is estimated that over 453,000 Australians are blind or vision impaired, however half of these people don't know it yet!

Vision loss can happen slowly, people are often unaware it is happening.

Eye Examinations

Regular eye examinations, with an optometrist can save sight.

In many cases, once vision is lost it cannot be restored.

Over 40?

Eye exams are recommended every 2 years.



90% of all blindness and vision impairment is preventable or treatable

If detected early!

As you get older Vision Changes



Lions Eye Health Program

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**Avoidable Vision Loss
Awareness and
Education Program**

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Diabetic Retinopathy

The diabetes epidemic is one of the largest and most complex health challenges in Australia.

Diabetic Retinopathy (DR) is a complication of diabetes which damages the tiny blood vessels inside the retina, resulting in vision loss.

The only way to detect DR is through a full eye examination. An eye exam can show early signs of damage before an individual notices any change in their vision.

Early detection, through eye exams every 2 years is the key to avoiding vision loss.

Treatment

There are several effective treatments to prevent or minimise vision loss associated with DR, including laser treatment, eye injections, surgical procedures and some medications.

However, once vision is lost, it cannot be restored!

Controlling blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol are also important preventive measures.



Everyone with Diabetes 1 & 2 is at risk

Glaucoma

1 in 10 will develop glaucoma
50% don't know they have it yet
10 times more likely if there is a family history

Glaucoma is a common eye disorder affecting visual function through damage to the optic nerve. It is commonly age-related, with incidence increasing after the age of 40 years.

There are different types of glaucoma. 90% of cases in Australia are primary open-angle glaucoma. Damage progresses slowly and vision is lost gradually. The early stages often go unnoticed, individuals not aware until a significant amount of damage and vision loss has occurred.

Eye exams every 2 years are recommended.

Treatment

It is important to diagnose glaucoma as soon as possible. If vision is lost, it can't be restored.

Treatment options, such as eye drops, laser and surgery are effective in delaying or stopping the progression of the disease.



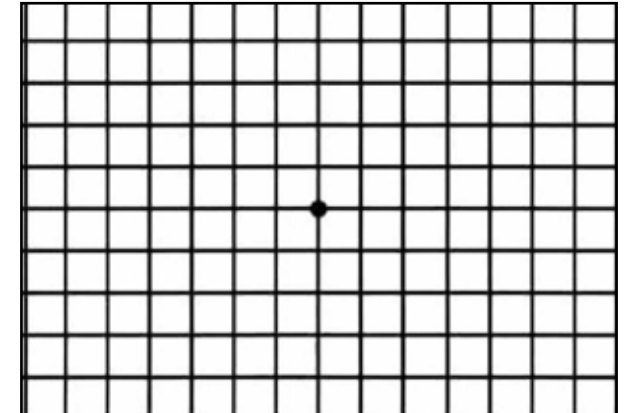
Macular Degeneration

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) causes poor vision by affecting the area responsible for central vision (the macula).

It does not usually affect peripheral or side vision. However, reading, watching TV, driving, recognising faces and colour discrimination become difficult.

Amsler Grid

Hold this grid at reading distance. Cover one eye and focus on the central dot. If the straight lines appear distorted, or blurred - book an eye exam.



AMD is most prevalent after the age of 50 years. About 30% of the population is affected by AMD. Two out of three people over 90 will develop AMD and one in four will experience significant vision loss from it.

Different Types of AMD

Dry AMD:

- develops slowly and results in gradual vision impairment.

Wet AMD

- Develops more rapidly and occurs when abnormal vessels develop beneath the retina and bleed.

If treatment options are available early detection is important!