

PRESBYOPIA AND CONTACT LENSES

**A clear, practical guide to age-related
near-vision changes**

Educational Leaflet About Contact Lenses



Reviewed by



الجمعية السعودية للبصريات
Saudi Society Of Optometry

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Why Is Clear Vision Important?

Vision helps us read, work, move safely, recognise faces and enjoy everyday moments. Clear vision depends on light entering the eye and being focused precisely on the retina.



A change in near vision is common with age and can usually be corrected.

From Light to Image: How Does the Eye Work?

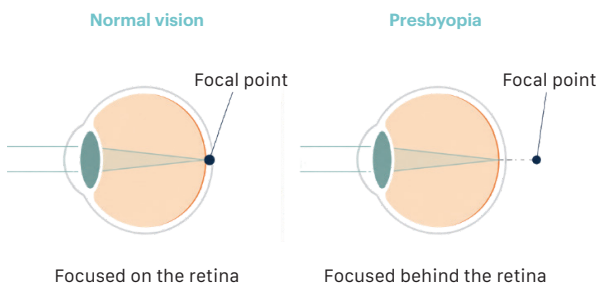
The cornea and the natural lens bend incoming light. The lens changes shape so the eye can shift focus between distant and near objects. The retina converts the focused image into signals that travel to the brain.

- **Myopia:** distant objects appear blurred.
- **Hyperopia:** near vision may be more difficult.
- **Astigmatism:** irregular focusing can cause blurred vision at different distances.
- **Presbyopia:** the eye gradually loses some ability to focus up close.

These conditions may occur individually or together, and an eye examination can determine the appropriate correction for you.

What is presbyopia?

Presbyopia is an age-related refractive condition that makes close work more difficult. It happens as the natural lens becomes less flexible and cannot change shape as easily for near focus.



It is different from hyperopia, although both may affect near vision. Presbyopia can also occur alongside myopia or astigmatism.

Presbyopia usually becomes noticeable in the early to mid-40s and progresses gradually.

A comprehensive eye examination can confirm the cause of blurred near vision and check the overall health of your eyes.

What Symptoms Might You Notice?



- Small print looks blurred at a normal reading distance.
- You hold a phone, menu or book farther away.
- Your eyes feel tired after reading or screen work.
- You need brighter light for close tasks.
- Close work may trigger a headache.

When Should You Schedule an Eye Exam?

Book a routine eye examination if near tasks are becoming difficult or your current glasses or contact lenses no longer feel adequate.

Seek urgent eye care for sudden vision loss, new flashes or many floaters, a curtain-like shadow, severe eye pain, or a sudden change in vision in one eye.

These symptoms are not typical of presbyopia and require urgent evaluation.



What are my options?

The best option depends on your prescription, work, hobbies, eye health, and personal preferences. Your optometrist can explain the benefits of each option and the factors to consider.

- **Glasses**
- **Multifocal glasses**
- **Contact lenses**
- **Monovision**

It is a vision correction method in which one eye is corrected for near vision and the other for distance vision, based on an optometrist's assessment.

Monovision is not a product like glasses or contact lenses; rather, it is a correction approach commonly achieved using contact lenses.

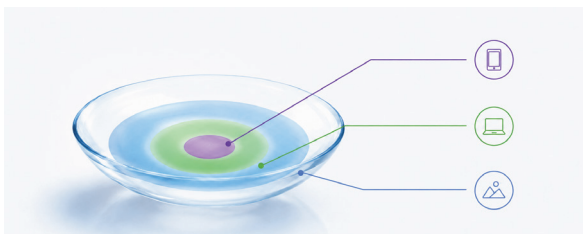
Simple and flexible choices



- **Reading glasses:** designed for close tasks.
- **Bifocals:** separate zones for distance and near vision.
- **Progressive lenses:** a gradual change in lens power for distance, intermediate, and near vision.
- **Task-specific lenses:** useful for computer or occupational distances.

Ready-made reading glasses may suit some people, but they do not correct astigmatism or differences between the two eyes. Ask your optometrist for advice if you are unsure.

Can Contact Lenses Correct Presbyopia?



Yes. Multifocal contact lenses provide more than one focusing power within each lens. Another approach, monovision, corrects one eye mainly for distance and the other mainly for near or intermediate vision.

Contact lens designs vary. Pupil size, prescription, visual needs, tear film, and lifestyle may influence which option is most suitable. Therefore, proper lens fitting and follow-up with an optometrist are essential.

It may take a short period for your visual system to adapt. The goal is to achieve a practical balance across the distances you use most.

Potential Benefits and Considerations

- Reduced reliance on reading glasses for some daily activities.
- A wider field of view without spectacle frames.
- Suitable for sports and active lifestyles.
- Near and distance vision can be supported with a single correction.

Some people may notice glare or halos, particularly in low-light conditions, and may need a period of adaptation.

Comfort and vision vary between individuals, and the optometrist may adjust the lens design or prescription after the trial.



Looking after your eyes

- Use only contact lenses that have been prescribed and fitted for you.
- Wash and dry your hands before touching your contact lenses.
- Follow the recommended wearing time and replacement schedule.
- Do not use tap water with contact lenses or their case.
- Do not sleep, swim, or shower while wearing contact lenses unless specifically advised by your optometrist.
- Attend follow-up appointments and replace your contact lens case regularly.

Remove your contact lenses and seek advice promptly if you experience pain, significant redness, discharge, sensitivity to light, or reduced vision.

Protecting your eyes outdoors

Some contact lenses include UV-blocking material, but they do not cover the entire eye and surrounding area.

- Wear sunglasses that provide broad UV protection.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat in strong sunlight.
- Ask your optometrist whether UV-blocking lenses are suitable for you.



Contact lenses are not a substitute for UV-absorbing sunglasses.

Questions worth asking

- Which correction best matches my daily visual needs?
- Could multifocal lenses or monovision suit my prescription?
- What adaptation period should I expect?
- How often should I have my eyes and lenses reviewed?
- Which symptoms mean I should stop lens wear and seek help?



Changes in near vision are natural, but they can be managed

Encourage family and friends who are holding reading material farther away, struggling in dim light or experiencing eye strain to arrange an eye examination.



Trusted sources

Clinical content reviewed against:

1. National Eye Institute. "Presbyopia." Updated 4 December 2024. <https://www.nei.nih.gov/eye-health-information/eye-conditions-and-diseases/presbyopia>
2. American Optometric Association. "Presbyopia." <https://www.aoa.org/healthy-eyes/eye-and-vision-conditions/presbyopia>
3. American Academy of Ophthalmology EyeWiki. "Presbyopia." <https://eyewiki.aao.org/Presbyopia>

This leaflet provides general education and does not replace an individual eye examination or professional medical advice.



Clear vision supports everyday life

This educational leaflet was developed for the Saudi Society of Optometry with the support of ACUVUE®.



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