

# Presbyopia

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## **What is presbyopia?**

Presbyopia is a vision condition in which the crystalline lens of your eye loses its flexibility. This results in difficulty in focusing on close objects.

## **What causes presbyopia?**

Your eye stops growing in your early teens. The lens, however, continues to grow and produces more and more cells. Eventually, the lens loses some of its elasticity and therefore loses some focusing ability.

## **At what age does presbyopia occur?**

It varies from person to person. Although presbyopia may seem to develop suddenly, the actual decline takes place over the course of many years. Presbyopia usually becomes apparent to people in their early to mid-forties.

## **What are signs/symptoms of presbyopia?**

Some signs/symptoms of presbyopia include the tendency to hold reading material at arms length, blurred vision at normal reading distance and eye fatigue along with headaches when attempting to do close work.

## **Can presbyopia be prevented?**

Unfortunately not. Presbyopia is a natural part of the aging process.

## **How is presbyopia diagnosed?**

A comprehensive eye examination by your doctor of optometry will include testing the quality of your near vision. This will determine the extent, if any, of presbyopia.

## **How is presbyopia treated?**

To compensate for presbyopia, doctors of optometry prescribe reading glasses, bifocals, trifocals or contact lenses. Since presbyopia can complicate other common vision conditions like nearsightedness, farsightedness and astigmatism, your optometrist will perform other tests to determine the specific lenses that will allow you to see clearly. Your optometrist will also ask questions about your physical health and your occupational and recreational activities. This information will aid in determining what type of lenses you need.

## **Will I have to wear glasses all the time?**

This will depend on a number of factors, including any other vision conditions you have. You may only need your glasses for reading, sewing or other close work. However, you may find that wearing your glasses all the time is more beneficial and convenient for your vision needs.

**Can I still wear contact lenses?**

Great strides are being made in the area of contact lenses. New technology is making it possible for many vision conditions, including presbyopia, to be corrected with contact lenses. Your doctor of optometry can help decide what is right for you.

**Why are frequent lens changes necessary after 40?**

The effects of presbyopia constantly change the ability of the crystalline lens to focus properly. As a result, periodic changes in your eyewear are necessary to maintain correct vision.

**How will presbyopia affect my lifestyle?**

After adjusting to your new eyewear, you should find that you can still do all the things you did before. Presbyopia will probably not have a significant effect on your lifestyle at all.