

Caring for the Geriatric Ophthalmic Patient



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Aging Transitioning Into a New Era

- Visual Impairment is inevitable in the aging adult
- Changes are a gradual progression
- Annual ophthalmic examinations are highly recommended
- Underlying diseases can lead to permanent vision loss

Patient Types: Informed

- Demanding, well-informed patients
 - Increased expectation
 - Choice of healthcare provider
 - Social networking
 - Educational Resources
 - Insurance Company demands

Patient Type: Uninformed

- Illiterate, unassuming patient
 - Poor comprehension
 - Less likely to follow instructions
 - Trusting of health care provider
 - Indigent, not highly educated
 - More health concerns

Education


Counseling

- Disease/Condition
- Family Involvement
- Medication
- Social Environment
- Economic Situation
- Other Needs



Physiological Changes

- Extraocular changes: gray lashes and brow
- Loss of orbital fat
- Droopy lids
- Deep lid folds
- Wrinkling of Skin
- Sunken eye sockets




Physiological Changes

- Orbital tumors
- Lids turned outward (Exotropia)
- Lids turned Inward (Esotropia)
- Scaly lids (Blepharitis)
- Tearing or matted eyes
- Puffy lower lids

Anterior Ocular Changes

- Dry/Red/Irritated Eyes
- Thin ocular tissues
- Corneal sensitivity or opacity
- Corneal Ring (Arcus of Senilis)
- Pupil atrophy (Senile Miosis)
- Opacity of crystalline lens (Cataract)
- Poor accommodation



Posterior Ocular Changes

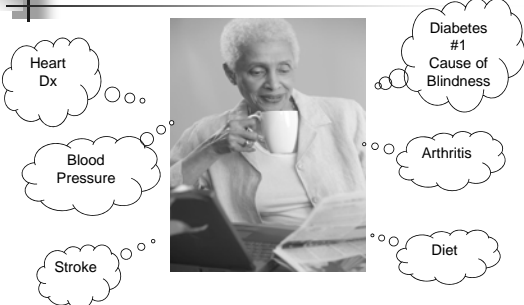
- Liquification of Vitreous gel
- Floaters
- Decrease in color sensitivity
- Ischemia
- Distortion
- Poor visual acuity/Glare
- Retinal changes

How Poor Vision Affects the Aging

- Disorientation
 - Hallucination
 - Paranoia
 - Depression
- Falls/Bodily Injury
 - Broken bones
 - Burns
 - Medication errors



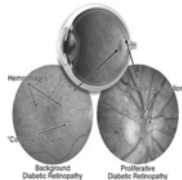
Managing Health Concerns



- Heart Dx
- Blood Pressure
- Stroke
- Diabetes #1 Cause of Blindness
- Arthritis
- Diet

Diabetic Retinopathy

- Failure to control and treat blood glucose can lead to a diabetic crisis
- Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness
- Uncontrolled diabetes will affect the kidneys

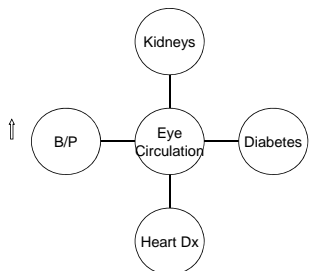


Heart Disease

- Obesity and poor circulation will make the heart work harder
- Inadequate Cardiac perfusion or blockage can lead to a **Stroke**
- Blood Pressure becomes elevated because of high cholesterol, cardiac perfusion and venous blockage
- Controlling the heart rate and blood pressure is essential to life



The Eye = Circulation



Glaucoma

- Leading cause of Blindness in young people as well as the aging adult
- Silent destroyer of sight; goes unnoticed
- Destroys peripheral vision
- No cure, do not regain sight lost
- Positive outcomes is dependent upon patient compliance

Autoimmune Diseases

Affects the mucus membranes and collagen tissues (Cornea)

- Arthritis
- Stevens Johnson
- Sjogrens

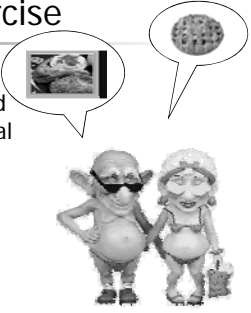


Cosmetic Conditions

- Esotropia
- Exotropia
- Blepharochalasis
- Ptosis
- Dacryocystitis
- Trichiasis
- Tumors/Masses

Diet and Exercise

- Positive physical results are affected by diet and physical activity
- Poor eating habits and exercise regimen will affect the critical body systems that can negatively affect the eye



Sensory Perception

- Bottle too small
- Hard to remove seal
- Can't keep eyes open
- Hard to instill medication in eye
- Can't feel drops in eye.
- Cornea Sensitivity to light, dryness, pain and irritation
- Reduced sensitivity to exposure
- Ocular injuries while instilling medication
- Discontinue drops due to burning sensation

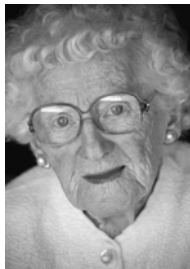
Sensory Perception

- Can't remove seal
- Painful to squeeze bottles
- Trembling/shaking hand
- Instill too many drops at a time; can't control flow
- Can't always feel them streaming down cheek
- Inability to hear or understand instructions
- Can't hear solution in bottle (shake)
- Inability to hear alarms, alerts or verbal reminders to take medication

(Arthritis)

Ocular Evaluation

- Make sure you are communicating effectively
- A comprehensive eye examination is needed to diagnose diseases
- Plan of care should be established



Diseases Affecting the Elderly

- Cataract
- Diabetic Retinopathy
- Glaucoma
- Age Related Macula Edema
- Cornea Edema
- Cornea Ulcers
- Injuries

Surgical Issues


- High Risk for:
 - Cardiac Arrest (ICDs/Stents)
 - Strokes
 - Blood Clots
 - Elevated Blood Glucose
 - Elevated Blood Pressure
 - Nausea and Vomiting

Social Issues

- Insurance
- Income
- Family
- Social/Economic Support
- Comprehension status

Intervention

- Identify their individual needs and address them
- Observe for signs of non compliance
- Failure to use medications as prescribed can exacerbate conditions such as: Glaucoma, Diabetic Retinopathy, Infections, etc.



Intervention

- Encourage them to get evaluated medically
- Teach them to manage their medications; both oral and topical agents. Reinforce instructions
- Pain Control; exercise joints/extremities
- Physical rehabilitation to improve mobility and sensitivity
- Medical devices that aid in the instillation of drops

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