

Nearsightedness (Myopia)



What is myopia?

Myopia, or nearsightedness as it is commonly termed, is a vision condition in which near objects are generally seen clearly, but distant objects are blurred and do not come into proper focus. At Vista Eye Care in Thornton, Colorado, our eye doctors like to diagnosis myopia as soon as possible in our patients to ensure a lifetime of clear, healthy vision.

Why does myopia occur?

When a patient's eyeball is too long, or the cornea (the clear part of your eye) has too much curvature, light entering the eye is not focused properly onto the retina. Hereditary factors often control the growth and development of the eye. However, some evidence supports the theory that myopia may also be caused by the stress of too much uncorrected near work.

How common is myopia?

Myopia is a common vision condition that affects nearly 30 percent of the American population. It normally first occurs in school age children. Since the eye continues to grow during childhood, myopia generally develops before the age of 20.

How is myopia diagnosed?

Nearsighted children are usually easy to identify because they often squint or have trouble seeing the whiteboard, movie screen, television set, or other distant objects. A comprehensive optometric examination at Vista Eye Care includes testing for myopia.

How is myopia treated?

Eyeglasses or contact lenses can be prescribed to optically correct nearsightedness and enable the patient to see more clearly. These devices alter the way the light images are focused in the eyes, but they do not cure myopia. You may only need them for certain activities, like watching television, going to a movie, or driving a car. A number of options to surgically alter the shape of the cornea, the eye's clear front surface, to reduce nearsightedness have been developed. These include procedures called photorefractive keratectomy (PRK) and laser assisted in-situ keratomileusis (LASIK). For young patients at risk for myopia development, Vista Eye Care's Myopia Management program can be utilized to slow down the axial elongation of the eye and thus reduce the patient's endpoint myopia.

How will myopia affect my lifestyle?

Most individuals adapt well to wearing glasses or contact lenses. For those individuals who feel glasses affect their image or interfere with their activities, contact lenses or refractive surgery may better meet their lifestyle and vision needs. Dr. Abert and Dr. Pedroza will assess your ocular health and amount of myopia in order to find the proper treatment to meet your visual needs.

How does myopia affect my eye's health?

A myopic eye is typically longer front-to-back than an eye that is not nearsighted. Because the eye's internal components (including the retina) are stretched in this manner, nearsighted eyes are more vulnerable to peripheral retinal disease including retinal holes, tears, and detachments. For patients with significant myopia, regular dilated eye examinations are necessary to ensure that the eyes are healthy. Any symptoms of floating objects in the field of vision or perceptions of flashes of light should be treated as an ocular emergency. If you experience these symptoms contact our office immediately.

Please call our office today at **(303) 450-2020** to schedule a comprehensive eye exam.

