

Guide Dogs.

An introduction to low vision conditions

—
Guide Dogs Queensland
2024

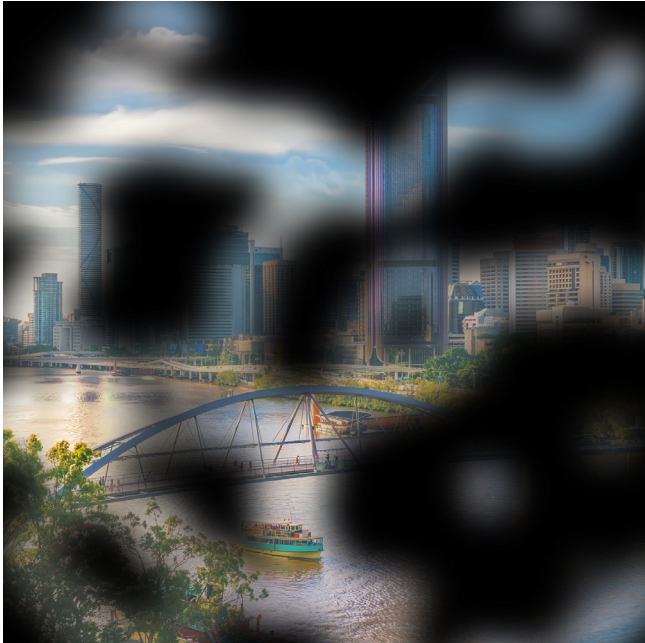


Whether it be through accident, illness, injury, genetic inheritance, or an ongoing condition, anyone can experience vision loss at any time.

Vision is a broad spectrum between fully sighted and blind. Often people imagine someone with a vision condition cannot see anything, but this is not usually the case.

People who are legally blind often have some form of functional vision such as light perception or peripheral vision.

This fact sheet introduces the most common vision conditions affecting Australians.



Diabetic Retinopathy (DR)

This is a common condition caused by diabetes. It damages the small blood vessels of the retina and, if left untreated, remains one of the most common causes of vision loss despite the extensive treatment options available. Regular eye checks are crucial to reducing the risk of vision loss.

People diagnosed with diabetic retinopathy often talk about how the “blobs”/floaters can move and sometimes look like spiders or something coming into their vision, which can impact a person’s mobility and ability to detect objects.



Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD)

This is a degenerative condition which affects the central area of the retina. Symptoms are initially minimal however they can worsen over time.

People with Age-related Macular Degeneration can maintain peripheral vision but do not have central vision, making tasks like driving, recognising faces and reading difficult. People with this condition may not look straight at you while talking because they are looking at you through their peripheral vision.



Glaucoma

Glaucoma is an eye condition which involves damage to the optic nerve resulting in significant vision loss or complete blindness.

A major risk factor for glaucoma is increased pressure in the eye, known as intraocular pressure (IOP).

The first symptom of glaucoma is often a loss of peripheral vision. Tunnel vision can develop, resulting in only being able to see objects that are directly in front and extremely close.



Cataracts

A cataract is the clouding of the lens of the eye. When the lens becomes opaque, the amount of light that gets through the eye becomes more difficult to see.

Blurry vision and glare sensitivity are common symptoms and colours may appear warped or distorted.



Refractive Error (RE)

Refractive errors are when the shape of the eye disrupts the focusing ability of the eye, leading to blurry vision.

These errors can cause a range of vision related issues including near sightedness, far sightedness and uneven focus.



Trachoma

This condition is chronic conjunctivitis through repeated exposure to chlamydia trachomatis via hands, hard surfaces and flies.

This infection causes a roughening of the inner surface of the eye lids causing pain to the eyes, damage to the cornea and possible permanent blindness.

Poor sanitation, crowded living conditions and lack of toilets can cause an increase of the disease.



Neurological Vision Impairment (NVI)

Neurological vision impairment may result in a hemianopia which is a vertical loss of vision on the left or right side and cannot be corrected with glasses.

This condition causes difficulties reading, avoiding obstacles and crossing the road safely. It is typically a result from stroke or brain injury.



Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP)

This is a progressive degeneration of the retina caused by the retina not receiving the required protein to remain healthy.

The condition affects night vision and peripheral sight; however the condition is degenerative which can result in permanent loss of vision.

We are here to help. For more information please contact:

Guide Dogs

1978 Gympie Road, Bald Hills QLD 4036

 07 3500 9060

 clients@guidedogsqld.com.au

 guidedogsqld.com.au

Proudly supported by



**Queensland
Government**