

Hints from the Heart



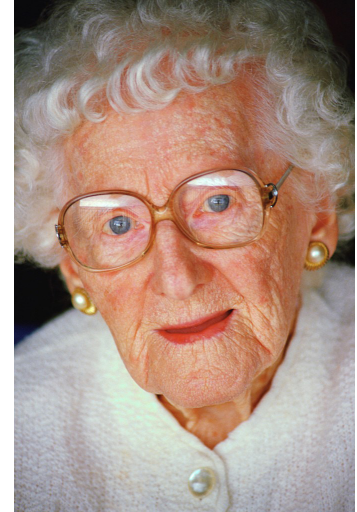
Q&A for Seniors and Vision Loss

Vision loss can be traumatic as it directly affects a person's ability to be independent and to participate in ordinary activities. Caregivers can help their loved one deal with their sadness over vision loss and encourage them to become as independent as possible. Below are some helpful questions and answers to help your loved one with vision loss:

What can I do to help my loved one with vision loss?

Beyond finding the right programs for your loved one, you can support his or her wish to be independent and praise any success at learning new ways to do things. This will reinforce a sense of accomplishment and help counteract frustration and sadness over the vision loss. Make modifications to their living space:

- Get rid of anything your loved one could trip on, such as coffee tables, toys on the floor, throw rugs.
- Make sure there are clear pathways within and to each room.
- Paint doors, trim and banisters a color that contrasts with the wall colors, so they will stand out more.
- Put yellow strips on the edge of each step and the beginning and end of ramps.
- Install grab bars for the tub and shower.



Do any foods prevent vision loss? Do any foods contribute to it?

Recent studies have found that those who eat large amounts of certain carbohydrates that cause blood sugar levels to rise and then fall rapidly may have a greater chance of developing central vision loss as they age. Examples of these foods are white bread, rice, potatoes, pasta, sugar and corn syrup. Foods rich in antioxidants have been found to help prevent vision loss. Whole grains, vegetable oil, eggs, nuts, meat, poultry, fish, dairy, carrots, kale, spinach, citrus fruits, green peppers and broccoli help vision over the long run.

How can I help my loved one with the depression and anxiousness that come with vision loss?

- Encourage them to join a support group, where others in the same situation share their feelings about and strategies to cope with vision loss.
- Participate in vision rehabilitation programs with your loved one.
- Counseling from someone trained to deal with vision issues, either individually or in a group setting.

For additional information, go to www.care.com and choose the *Senior Care* tab.

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