

Identifying Signs of Vision Loss in Seniors

Many seniors are hesitant to discuss concerns regarding any vision problems they may be experiencing. For this reason, it is helpful to know how to recognize changes in behavior and appearance that indicate the senior could benefit from a visit to the doctor or eye care professional.

Watch for these signs that may indicate vision loss:

Everyday Activities

- Groping for missing objects by under-reaching or over-reaching
- Discontinuing or doing certain activities differently such as reading, watching television, driving, walking, or engaging in hobbies
- Squinting or tilting the head to the side to see
- Holding reading material close to the face or at an angle
- Having difficulty identifying faces, objects or sign lettering
- Having trouble identifying colors
- Selecting clothing in unusual color combinations or patterns
- Not noticing stains on clothing
- Requesting more or different kinds of lighting for reading or other activities
- Tripping on area rugs
- Writing less clearly and having trouble writing on a line



Moving Around

- Constantly bumping into things
- Having difficulty walking on irregular or bumpy surfaces
- Moving hesitantly, shuffling feet or brushing against the wall while walking
- Going up and down stairs slowly and cautiously
- Acting visually disoriented or confused in a familiar place

Eating and Drinking

- Having problems getting food onto a fork
- Having difficulty cutting or serving food
- Spilling food off the edges of the plate while eating
- Pouring liquids over the top of a cup or drinking glass
- Knocking over glasses while reaching across the table for another item

Listen for these complaints that might indicate vision problems:

- Halos or rings around lights
- Migraine headaches that blur vision
- Reduced night vision
- Seeing spots or flashes of light in front of eyes
- Eyes hurt
- Seeing double or view is distorted
- Needing more light

Continuum Care provides in-home care and can help a senior adjust to vision loss through various adaptive techniques. **Continuum Care** also improves a senior's quality of life, and the possibilities that in-home care can be a long term sustainable option.

Source: American Federation for the Blind