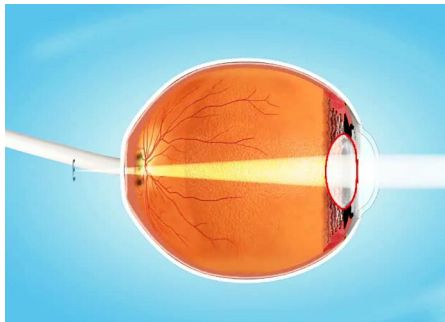




LONG-SIGHTEDNESS (HYPEROPIA) IN ADULTS

Q What is long-sightedness?

A Long-sightedness affects almost a quarter of the population. It occurs when either the eye ball is too short or when the curve on the front of the eye (cornea) is too flat compared to a normal eye. As a result, the light entering the eye does not come to a focus by the time it reaches the back of the eye (retina).



Young people with mild to moderate long-sightedness are able to see clearly in the distance because they can use the eye's built-in focusing mechanism (the lens) to increase the focal power of the eye (accommodate) and bring the light into focus on the retina. However, they may have difficulty seeing near objects and reading.

Q Will the situation get worse?

A Unfortunately, the eye gradually loses the ability to accommodate throughout life and therefore most older people who are long-sighted require spectacles.

If your ability to focus is significantly reduced, you may need to wear two different pairs of glasses, one pair for distance and the other for close-up. Alternatively, some people use progressive, or bi-focal lenses, in order to see objects clearly that are both close up and far away. These lenses are more convex at the bottom to allow you to focus

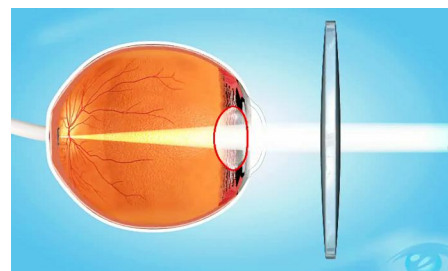
on nearby objects, and less convex at the top, to allow you to focus on distant objects.

Q What causes long-sightedness?

A When you are born, the eye ball, like the rest of you, is small and as a result most infants are long-sighted to some degree. As the eye ball grows during the first few years of life, most children grow out of their long-sightedness. However, in some cases the eye does not grow enough or the cornea is too flat and long-sightedness persists. It is thought that long-sightedness is usually an inherited condition.

Q What treatment is available?

A If you are diagnosed with long-sightedness, your optometrist may prescribe spectacles or contact lenses to correct your vision. You may need to wear these all the time or, in the case of spectacles, just for reading.



Q How does it work?

A Long-sightedness is corrected using glasses that have a convex lens - a lens that curves outwards. These lenses ensure that light rays focus on to the retina meaning you can see clearly. The lens of the eye becomes less flexible with age, which is why you may need to increase the strength

of your prescription as you get older.

Q Can I wear contact lenses instead of glasses?

A Contact lenses can also be used to correct long-sightedness in the same way as spectacles. People often prefer contact lenses to spectacles as they are virtually invisible and are more convenient particularly for sports and other activities .

Q What about surgery?

A Surgical treatment for long-sightedness involves increasing the curve of the cornea in order to increase its focusing power. Nowadays, laser surgery is the most popular way of achieving this.

Q What happens if I just ignore the fact that I am long-sighted?

A Without treatment, a clear focused image cannot be formed in the eye. In children, moderate to high long-sightedness can result in one of the eyes turning inwards (squint). If this happens the vision in this eye may not develop properly and the eye will become lazy.

Long-sightedness in adults may result in blurred vision, eye strain and headaches. There is no evidence that wearing spectacles or contact lenses makes long-sightedness worse or that any form of eye exercises lessens the need for spectacles.

