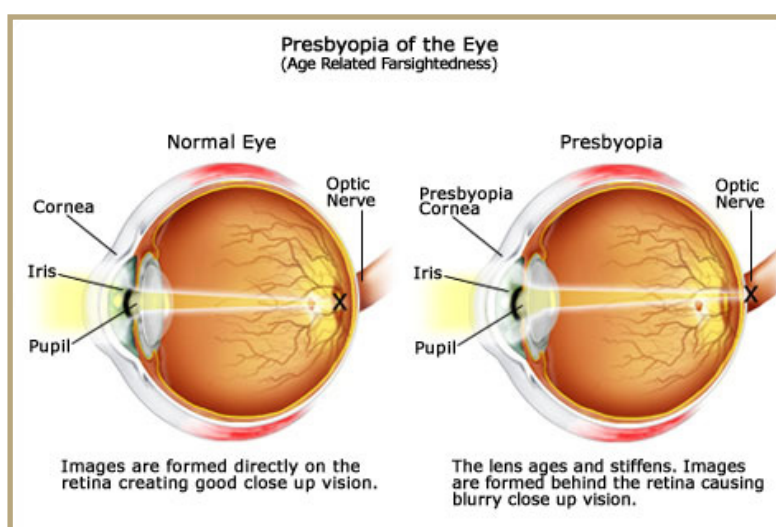


PRESBYOPIA

What is presbyopia?

After the age of 40, people slowly lose the ability to focus on objects that are nearby. This is called presbyopia.



What causes presbyopia?

As you focus on an object, the lens of the eye changes, getting thicker and thinner. When we are young, the lens is soft and flexible and can easily respond to the ciliary muscle. To look at something far away, the ciliary muscle relaxes causing the lens to flatten. When we focus on an object that is close up, the ciliary muscle contracts, causing the lens to thicken. As we age, the lens loses its flexibility or the power to accommodate. When this happens, people have difficulty reading and performing other close up tasks.

No medications, vitamins or exercises can stop or reverse the normal aging process.

How is it treated?

- **Reading glasses** help with near focus. Start with the lowest magnification you need to be comfortable and slowly increase the strength.

Bifocals provide correction for both near and distant vision. Trifocals add correction for intermediate distance. A progressive lens has a continuous, gradual change in prescription from the top to the bottom of the lens.

- **Contact lenses** offer 2 options:
 - * The most common option is to correct one eye for distance and one eye for near vision. Despite some loss in depth perception, many people adapt well to this arrangement.
 - * Bifocal contact lenses are manufactured in different ways. One kind of bifocal allows you to read when you look down. The other type lets you read in any position, but can cause annoying ghost images, haziness and colour fringes.

Please note that these are general guidelines. If in doubt, consult your ophthalmologist.