

Nethra Arogyam

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*Reduce
preventable
blindness*



EYE CARE WITH CARE



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Nearly 80 % of the visual impairment can be prevented, with timely treatment. We ought to safe guard our vision.

Reduce preventable blindness

India has the world's largest population of the blind. Studies reported that India has millions of avertible blindness cases, who may turn out to be partially or fully blind, if not prevented on time. Preventable blindness must be addressed with a strong pledge as it influences individuals' quality of life - directly and intensely. It also effects individual's economic activity and subsequently influences the productive output of the whole nation.

National programme for control of blindness (NPCB) defines preventable blindness as "The loss of blindness that could have been completely prevented by institution of effective preventive or prophylactic measures e.g. xerophthalmia, trachoma and glaucoma".

As per Vision 2020, a document by World Health Organization (WHO) and The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB), **preventable blindness can be reduced by two ways:**

- by enhancing the skills and training personnel
- by spreading awareness to the community.

The preventable blindness arises due to cataract, diabetic eye disease, trauma, glaucoma and Xerophthalmia (dry eye syndrome).

Cataract:

Cataract occurs on a normal aging process - the natural lens of the eye become opaque, which in turn causes blurring and deteriorates patients'

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vision. As per study, it is the leading cause of vision loss in India, and more than 50% of patients delay cataract surgeries because of fear of losing eyesight, painful procedure or long recovery period. In fact, it can be rectified with cataract removal surgery – where new lenses are implanted.

Diabetic eye disease:

Diabetic eye disease includes eye problems like cataracts, glaucoma, diabetic macular edema and diabetic retinopathy. Diabetes is the most common cause of blurred vision. Diabetic retinopathy or glaucoma will have no symptoms in the early stages, so diabetics need to seek regular eye check-ups. Governing diabetes is the only key for managing diabetic eye disease. Early diagnosis and treatment can help to retain a good vision.

Glaucoma:

Glaucoma is a disease of the optic nerve. It progresses gradually and the patient may not feel any symptoms until it affects central vision. This results in permanent vision loss. So, it is important for each of us, from infants to senior, to have our eyes checked regularly. Early detection and treatment of glaucoma are the only way to prevent vision impairment and blindness. Remember glaucoma is a preventable but irreversible cause of blindness.

Xerophthalmia (dry eye syndrome):

Abnormal dryness of the conjunctiva and cornea of the eye, with inflammation and ridge formation. It's a condition where the eye is incapable of producing tears. It is mainly associated with **vitamin A deficiency** and can be resolved by life style changes



and medical treatment. It is crucial to include sufficient vitamin A in your diet, which is naturally available in fruits and vegetables like carrots, black-eyed peas, spinach, broccoli, sweet red pepper, mango and many more.

Trachoma

It is a bacterial infection caused by the bacterium Chlamydia trachomatis. In the initial stages, trachoma may cause mild itching and irritation of eyes and eyelids. Gradually it may lead to swollen eyelids and pus draining from the eyes. If trachoma is not treated on time, it can lead to blindness.

Trauma:

Another major cause of blindness is trauma, especially in factories. Compulsory inspection of workplaces is needed to ensure protective

eye wear is provided to every worker, mainly for those who have high chance of eye injuries. It is necessary to ensure safety standards for workers. This can help to reduce the burden of blindness to some extent.

Apart from the aforementioned causes – hypertension and age related vision problems may cause blindness, which can also be treated successfully by early diagnosis and treatments.

Ophthalmologists in India are among the best trained in the world and have been striving untiringly to put their profession to the best use of the citizens of India. Government is also encouraging public-private partnerships in this endeavour to bring down preventable blindness. With this infrastructure, we can easily safeguard our vision and have a better quality of life.

ABHISHEK NETHRADHAMA is an ISO 9001:2015 Certified speciality eye hospitals are committed to be the most patient friendly, well equipped eye hospital attended by experienced team of doctor to give the best services in eye care guided by sound ethical values.

Doddaballapura

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