



Caregiver Bulletin

Maintaining Hearing and Vision

What are some signs of eye disease or vision problems?

- Redness of eye or area around eyes.
- Excessive or eye watering or dryness.
- Pain in or around the eyes.
- Frequent rubbing of eyes.
- Squinting, shutting or covering one eye.
- Getting closer to the TV.
- Tipping or pushing head forward.
- Hard time focusing on things close or far away.
- Stumbling or hesitancy on steps or curbs.
- Self-injurious behaviors.
- Isolating or choosing to not participate in activities they used to enjoy.



Maintaining Hearing and Vision

Hearing and vision loss can be a normal part of aging. Diseases can lead to permanent damage. Regular exams can find loss early and reduce risk of more damage. The individuals you care for might need a little extra attention to preserve their hearing and vision. Adults who have a diagnosis of Down syndrome are at higher risk for hearing and vision problems and tend to have them at an earlier age.



Vision & Eye Health

What causes vision loss?

Vision loss can be common with aging. Many diseases can harm eyesight. For some diseases, early discovery can stop vision loss. Even when there is vision loss, it is important to know what type of loss and how bad it is so they can get the right supports.



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Hearing and Vision Supports

Hearing Loss & Ear Health

What causes hearing loss?

Everyone can lose hearing with age. We lose hearing from earwax blockage, damage to the ear drum or from loud noise. Some medications can damage ears. Infections or diseases like diabetes also harm hearing.

What are signs of hearing problems?

Someone might be losing their hearing if they:

- Have muffled speech or trouble understanding other's speech.
- Don't make sense when they answer questions.
- Sit close to the TV or turn the volume up loud.
- Seem confused in noisy situations.
- Isolate or choose not to participate in activities they used to enjoy.
- Engage in self-harming behaviors.



How can I support someone with vision problems?

- Prevent vision loss with yearly medical exams.
- Schedule eye exams with an ophthalmologist or optometrist.
- Eyeglasses may help if recommended by a professional.
- Use contrasting colors, non-glare lighting and surfaces and large print.
- Provide increased lighting and use night lights.
- Organize belongings.
- Keep eyeglasses clean and prevent scratches.
- Engage in daytime activities.
- Provide support for night-time activities.
- Allow time to adjust to change of light.
- Protect the "good" eye (if there is one).

How can I support someone with hearing loss?

- Schedule yearly exams with a health care professional to check for wax, disease and gradual hearing loss.
- Speak clearly and slowly in lower tones.
- Reduce background noises.
- When speaking, face person with light on your face, not behind you.
- Use hearing aid if recommended.
- Keep hearing aid clean and with fresh batteries.

