

Myopia in Children

What Is Myopia?

Myopia (my-oh-pee-uh), or nearsightedness, is a visual condition in which **distant objects appear blurry**. By 2050, about 50% of people worldwide will have myopia and about 10% of people worldwide will have high myopia.

Causes

A myopic eye is longer than normal, causing light to focus in front of the retina. Both **genetic and environmental factors** contribute to myopia.

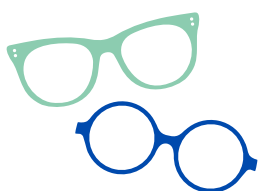
Signs and Symptoms

Symptoms of myopia include eye strain, headaches, squinting, rubbing eyes, excessive blinking and trouble seeing distant objects clearly.

High Myopia

High myopia occurs when refractive error is greater than -6 diopters. People with high myopia are at **higher risk** of developing other eye problems, such as retinal tears and detachment, cataracts, myopic macular degeneration, or glaucoma.

Myopia progression can be prevented!



Special Glasses

Custom myopia control glasses can slow progression.



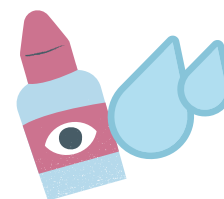
Special Contacts

Multifocal and orthokeratology (ortho-k) contact lenses can slow progression.



Lifestyle Changes

At least two hours outdoors per day, a healthier diet, and less time with screens and close-up work can delay onset.



Atropine Eye Drops

Medicated atropine eye drops can slow progression.

Schedule regular eye exams for your child. Earlier diagnosis means more successful treatment. Regular checkups should start between 6 and 12 months old — no child is too young for a full eye exam if something seems abnormal. School-age children should receive annual exams, and most insurances, including Medicaid, cover the cost of a full vision exam and at least one pair of glasses.

For more information, call the NYC Health Department Vision Program at 855-771-3937 or visit nyc.gov/health/vision.