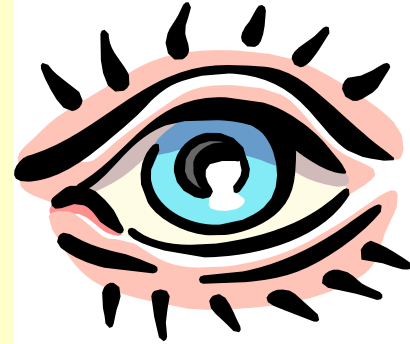


Low Vision

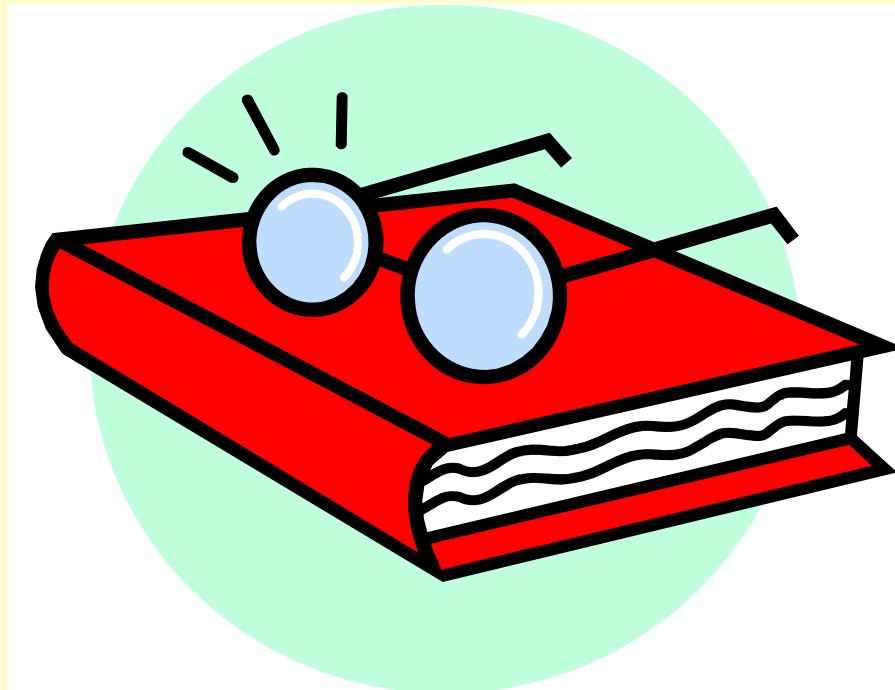


Low vision is.....



A level of visual disability that causes difficulty in carrying out everyday tasks

95% of people with low vision have some level of useful sight.



Legally blind



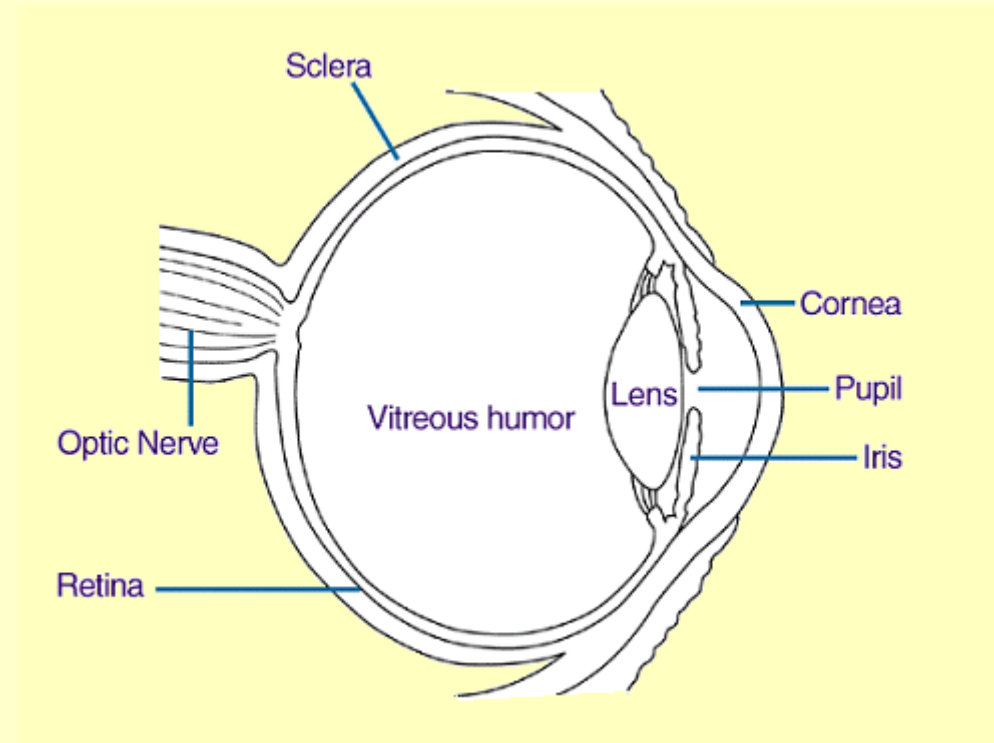
- Unable to see the top letter of the chart (or 6/60 line) with the better eye
- Less than 10 degree visual field (normal is 180 degrees)
- Eligible for government benefits

Low vision can be caused by:

- Inherited conditions of the eye
- Ageing conditions of the eye
- Trauma



Diagram of the eye

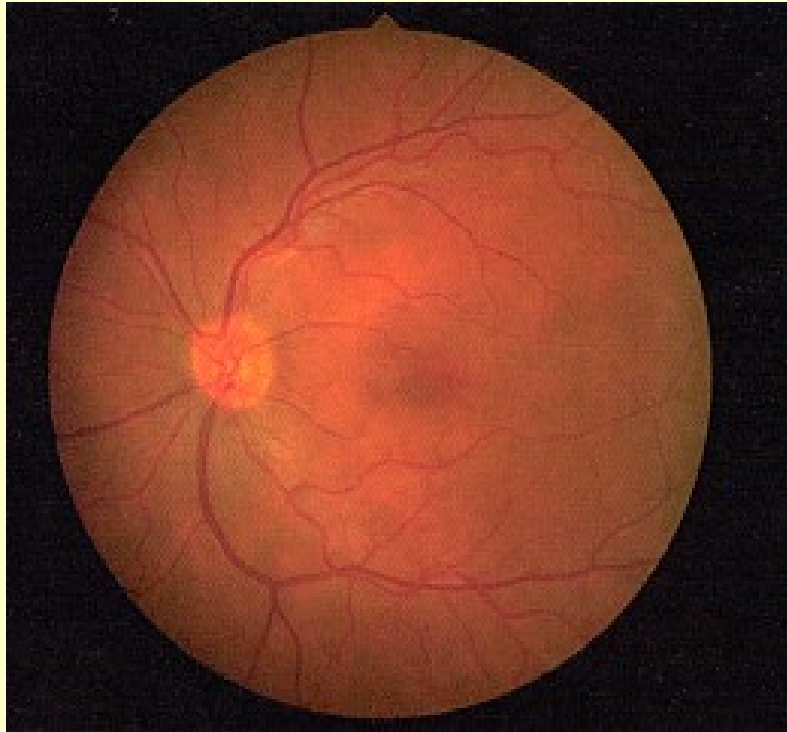


Retinitis pigmentosa

- Inherited (usually), degenerative condition
- Rare (1:4000)
- Night blindness, reduced visual field
- No treatment is yet available



Normal retina

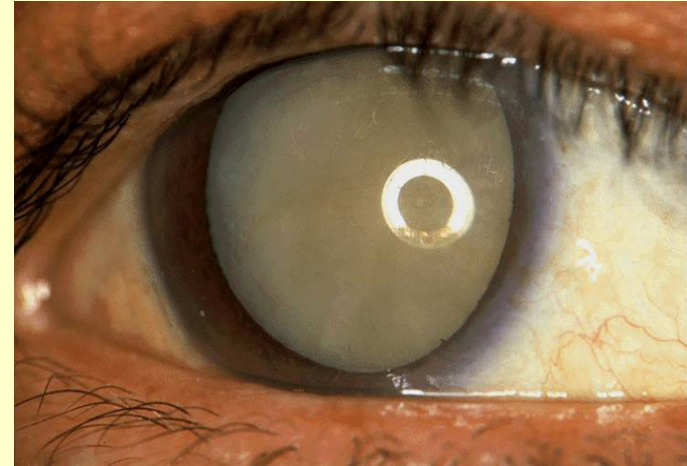


Retinitis pigmentosa



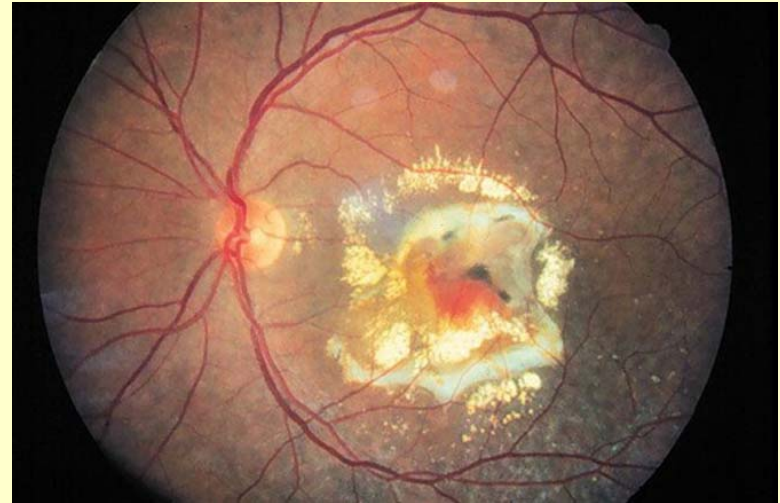
Cataract

- Cloudy lens inside eye
- Congenital, trauma or age related
- Usually an operation is possible but not always



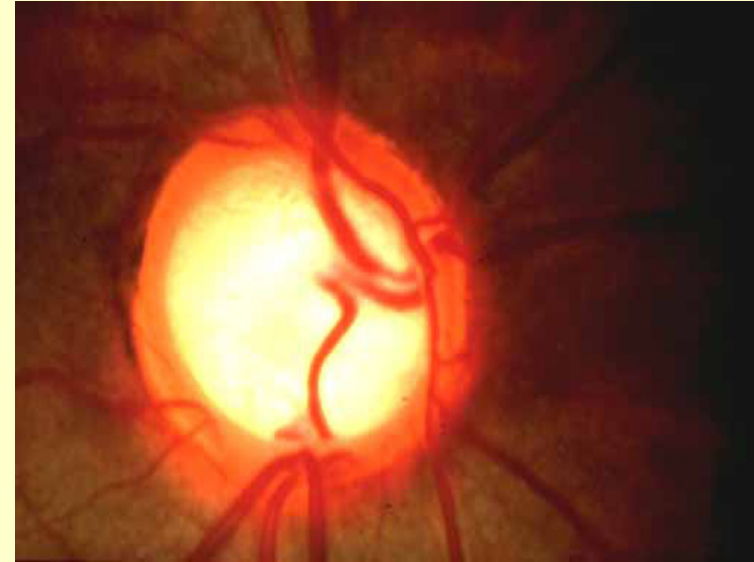
Age related macular degeneration

- Mostly in older population
- Affects central vision
- Sight can be distorted
- Sometimes “patches” are missing



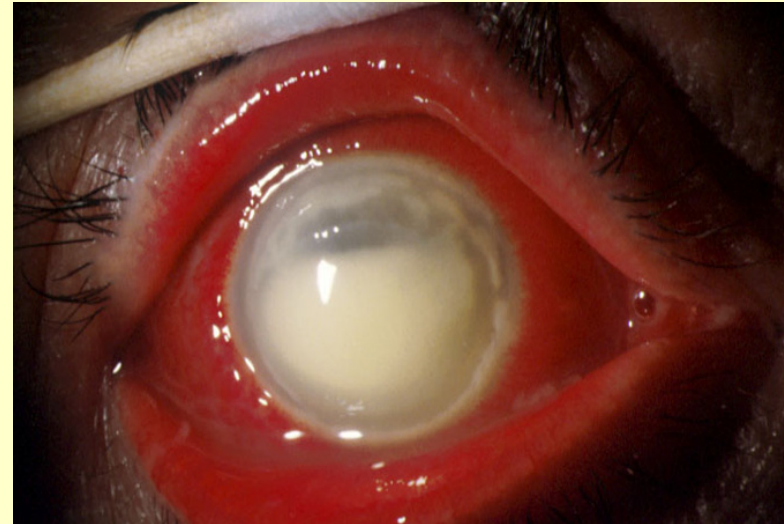
Glaucoma

- Disease of the optic nerve
- Affects peripheral vision first
- Difficult to detect in the early stages
- Often pressure in eye will be elevated



Trauma

- Scarring of cornea
 - burns
 - foreign bodies
 - infections



Diabetes

- Commonly affects retinal blood vessels
- Severity depends on
 - amount of time diabetic
 - control of blood sugar level
- Regular review is necessary



The role of optometrists in low vision

- Ensuring best possible vision through
 - glasses (reading or distance)
 - magnification aids
 - lighting advice
- Ongoing monitoring of the health of the eyes



Optometrists

- No referral is required
- To find your nearest optometrist
 - Yellow pages
 - NZ Association of Optometrists
 - **0800 4 EYECARE** (0800 439 322)
 - **www.nzao.co.nz**



Other services available to people with low vision

- Royal NZ Foundation of the Blind
 - Phone **0800 24 33 33**
 - www.rnzfb.org.nz
- Retina New Zealand
 - Phone **0800 233 833**
 - www.retina.org.nz

