

Myopia (Nearsightedness)

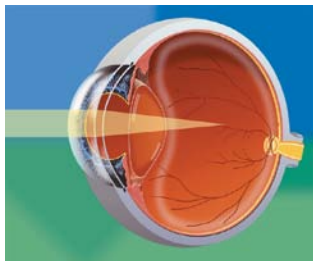
Nearsightedness, or myopia, is a vision problem experienced by up to about one-third of the population. In fact, a recent study* found that myopia is more common among Americans now than it was 30 years ago.

Nearsighted people have difficulty reading highway signs and seeing other objects at a distance, but can see for up-close tasks such as reading or sewing.

Myopia Symptoms and Signs

Nearsighted people often have headaches or eye strain and might squint or feel fatigued when driving or playing sports. If you experience these symptoms while wearing your glasses or contact lenses, you may need a comprehensive eye examination as well as a new prescription.

What Causes Myopia?



Myopia occurs when the eyeball is slightly longer than usual from front to back. This causes light rays to focus at a point in front of the retina, rather than directly on its surface.

Nearsightedness runs in families and usually appears in childhood. This vision problem may stabilize at a certain point, although sometimes it worsens with age. Myopia becomes worse during growth spurts. This is known as myopic creep.

Myopia Treatment

Nearsightedness may be corrected with glasses, contact lenses or eye surgery. Depending on your vision problem, you may need to wear your glasses or contact lenses all the time or only when you need distance vision, like driving, seeing a chalkboard or watching a movie. If you're nearsighted, your prescription is a negative number. The higher the numeral, the stronger your lenses will be.

Refractive surgery can reduce or even eliminate your need for glasses or contacts. The most common procedures are performed with an excimer laser.

- In PRK the laser removes a layer of corneal tissue, which flattens the cornea and allows light rays to focus closer to or even on the retina.
- In LASIK — the most common refractive procedure — a flap is cut through the top of the cornea, a laser removes some corneal tissue, and then the flap is dropped back into place.

*Increased prevalence of myopia in the United States between 1971-1972 and 1999-2004. *Archives of Ophthalmology*. December 2009.

Want to learn more? Please call Dr. Lothes at (614) 841-9300 to set-up an examination and consultation.