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Prevent Blindness Provides Free Resources as Part of April's Women's Eye Health and Safety Month to Educate Women on Necessary Steps to Help Save Sight

- *As more women than men have eye disease and unique vision issues, Prevent Blindness provides free resources including webpages, fact sheets and expert videos to help prevent unnecessary vision loss in women* -

CHICAGO (March 27, 2024) – [Prevent Blindness](#), the nation's leading nonprofit eye health organization, has declared April as Women's Eye Health and Safety Month. According to [Orbis International](#), globally there are 112 million more women than men living with vision loss, including blindness. Prevent Blindness is offering free resources, including fact sheets, shareable social media graphics, educational videos and web pages, on a range of eye health issues that predominantly affect women.

Women have a higher prevalence of age-related macular degeneration, cataract, dry eye, glaucoma, refractive error and thyroid eye disease. According to [The Lancet Global Health Commission on Global Eye Health: vision beyond 2020](#) report, the gender imbalance can be attributed to demographic factors (women living longer than men) and social factors (women having reduced access to care).

New this year, Prevent Blindness is collaborating with the Delta Gamma Foundation to share co-branded resources and information with their members on topics specifically related to women's eye health. Additionally, Delta Gamma Alumna Lauren C. Ditta, MD, Pediatric Neuro-Ophthalmologist, Le Bonheur Children's Hospital, and Associate Professor of Ophthalmology and Pediatrics, Hamilton Eye Institute, University of Tennessee Health Science Center will be participating in a new episode of the [Prevent Blindness Focus on Eye Health Expert Series](#), to address children's vision and parent advocacy.

In another segment of the Prevent Blindness Focus on Eye Health Expert Series, [Janine Austin Clayton, MD](#), FARVO, Associate Director for Research on Women's Health and Director, [Office of Research on Women's Health at the National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#), discusses a variety of women's eye health issues including vision loss and mental health, access to eyecare, and general tips for women to keep eyes healthy in the "[Women's Eye Health and Safety](#)" episode.

Hormones may cause women to experience changes in their vision throughout their lifetime, including during puberty, [pregnancy](#), and menopause. In fact, hormone levels change significantly during pregnancy. According to [All About Vision](#), these changes can affect:

- **Eyelids** – Many pregnant women have increased pigmentation around the eyelids called melasma or chloasma.
- **Corneas** – The corneas may change in thickness, curvature and sensitivity during pregnancy. This can result in refractive error, which causes blurry vision. It's also possible for women who had been wearing contact lenses before pregnancy to develop a temporary intolerance to them.
- **Tear production** – Pregnancy requires the work of many hormones. Sometimes these hormones can affect the tear film and lacrimal glands of the eyes, leading to dry eye syndrome.
- **Intraocular pressure (IOP)** – Pressure within the eye decreases during pregnancy, though it's rare for pressure to become dangerously low while pregnant.
- **Lenses** – Accommodation is a function of the eye's lens that allows it to change focus from distant vision to near vision. During pregnancy and lactation, some women have reported losing their accommodation ability.

Women who have diabetes are at higher risk for developing diabetes-related retinopathy. Prevent Blindness strongly recommends all women alert their doctor to any changes to their vision during pregnancy.

Women who are perimenopausal (nearing menopause) or already in menopause may also experience vision changes. In fact, hormone fluctuations may cause changes in eyesight and eye shape, which may cause contact lenses to become uncomfortable. Dry eye occurs at double the rate in postmenopausal women, according to the [American Academy of Ophthalmology \(AAO\)](#).

“Due to a variety of issues, data continues to show that women face significant barriers to vision and eye healthcare not only in the United States, but around the world,” said Kira Baldonado, Vice President of Public Health and Policy at Prevent Blindness. “By providing women the necessary information they need and access to resources for quality vision care, we can help put an end to preventable vision loss and blindness.”

For more information on women's eye health topics, including fact sheets on eye diseases and eye safety, please visit [PreventBlindness.org](#). Prevent Blindness also offers a free listing of financial assistance services in English and Spanish at: [preventblindness.org/vision-care-financial-assistance-information/](#).

About Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, visit us at [PreventBlindness.org](https://www.preventblindness.org), and follow us on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#), [Threads](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

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