

NEI Research Responds to Vision-Related Quality of Life Challenges

Chronic Dry Eye

Chronic dry eye is an often unrecognized, unattended part of the aging process affecting upwards of 12 million Americans. It affects women two-to-three times more often than men, and it is most common in post-menopausal women due to the hormonal changes associated with aging. NEI estimates that 3.2 million women in the United States over the age of 50—or 1 in 12—suffer from chronic dry eye. Affecting quality of life as well as physical health, it is



rapidly becoming a public health issue.

“Two-thirds of the visually-impaired in the world are women. Increased NIH funding to support research to further understand this gender difference is critical. My research interests are in the area of chronic dry eye, which is an aging and women’s health issue that affects both health and quality of life.”

Kelly Nichols, O.D., Ph.D. M.P.H.
(Ohio State University College of Optometry)

Safe Senior Driving

Older drivers have twice the rate of motor vehicle collision involvement as compared to middle-aged adults. Functional impairments are a major underlying cause of this elevated crash risk, with vision impairment playing a significant role since it is very prevalent in the over-60 population. NEI-sponsored research has addressed what aspects of vision impairment affect crash risk and has identified interventions to reduce this elevated risk.

“We found that cataract surgery reduces the rate of crash involvement by 50 percent compared to older adults with cataract who do not elect surgery. This is largely due to improvements in contrast sensitivity. Most recently, we have begun to examine peripheral vision field loss in glaucoma and its role in driver safety.”



Cynthia Owsley, Ph.D., M.S.P.H.
(University of Alabama at Birmingham)

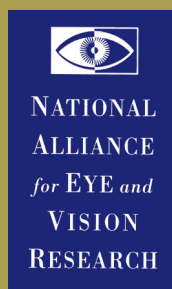
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The National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research

(NAEVR) is a non-profit advocacy coalition comprised of 50 professional, consumer and industry organizations involved in eye and vision research. NAEVR’s goal is to achieve the best vision for all Americans through advocacy and public education for eye and vision research sponsored by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Eye Institute (NEI) and other federal research entities.

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