

# WHY CARE ABOUT YOUR EYES?

An Eye Health Information Session



Brought to you by the Centre for  
Healthy Aging at Providence and CNIB

# Why Are We Concerned?

- By the age of 65, one in nine Canadians will have a visual impairment
- By the age of 75, one in four Canadians will have a visual impairment
- Evidence suggests that many people with low vision are not seeking the appropriate vision health care
- Some reported vision difficulties are simply due to uncorrected refractive error

# Why Should You Be Concerned?

- At least half of this vision loss can be improved and one quarter is preventable
- Loss of vision has an impact on activities of daily living and social function
- Reduced vision is a factor in 18% of hip fractures
- Once damage is done to the eyes, it cannot be reversed

# Leading Causes of Vision Loss

There are four major causes of vision loss in older adults:

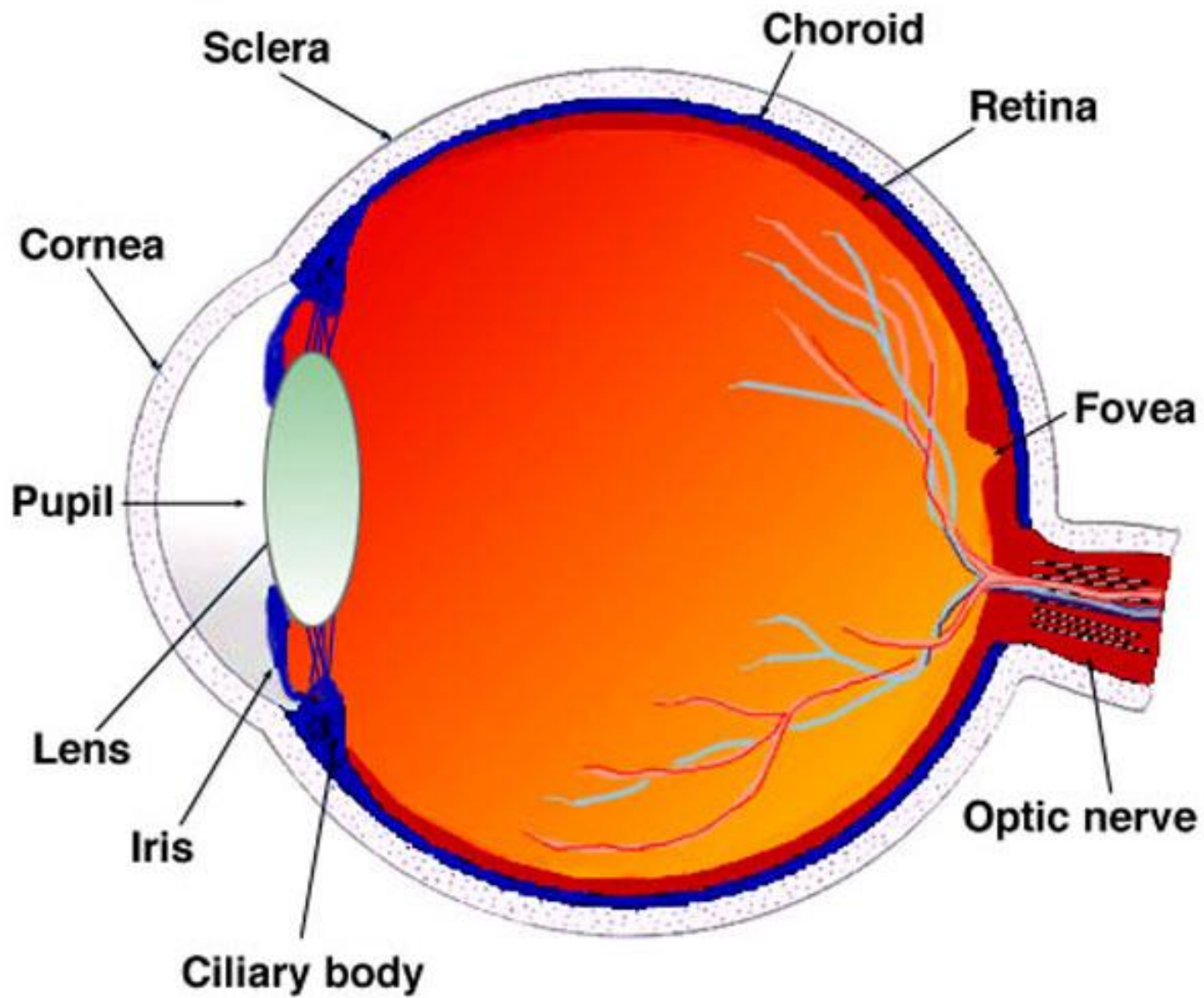
- **MACULAR DEGENERATION** is by far the most common cause of permanent vision loss
- **CATARACT** is another leading cause of vision loss, however vision can be restored surgically
- **GLAUCOMA** can slowly rob a person of their vision without being aware of it
- **DIABETIC RETINOPATHY** is more likely to occur in longstanding diabetics

# Macular Degeneration

- Is a degenerative condition affecting the part of the retina responsible for your sharp, fine detailed vision
- 11% of those 65 to 75 and 30% of those over 75 will have AMD
- Robs the central vision, but rarely causes complete blindness
- Two basic types of AMD: dry and wet

# Dry Macular Degeneration

- Accounts for 90% of all incidents of macular degeneration
- The less severe form, usually resulting in mild to moderate vision loss
- There is no medical treatment but studies have shown that a particular combination of high dose vitamins can slow down the process



*Fig. 6. Vertical sagittal section of the adult human eye.*

# Wet Macular Degeneration

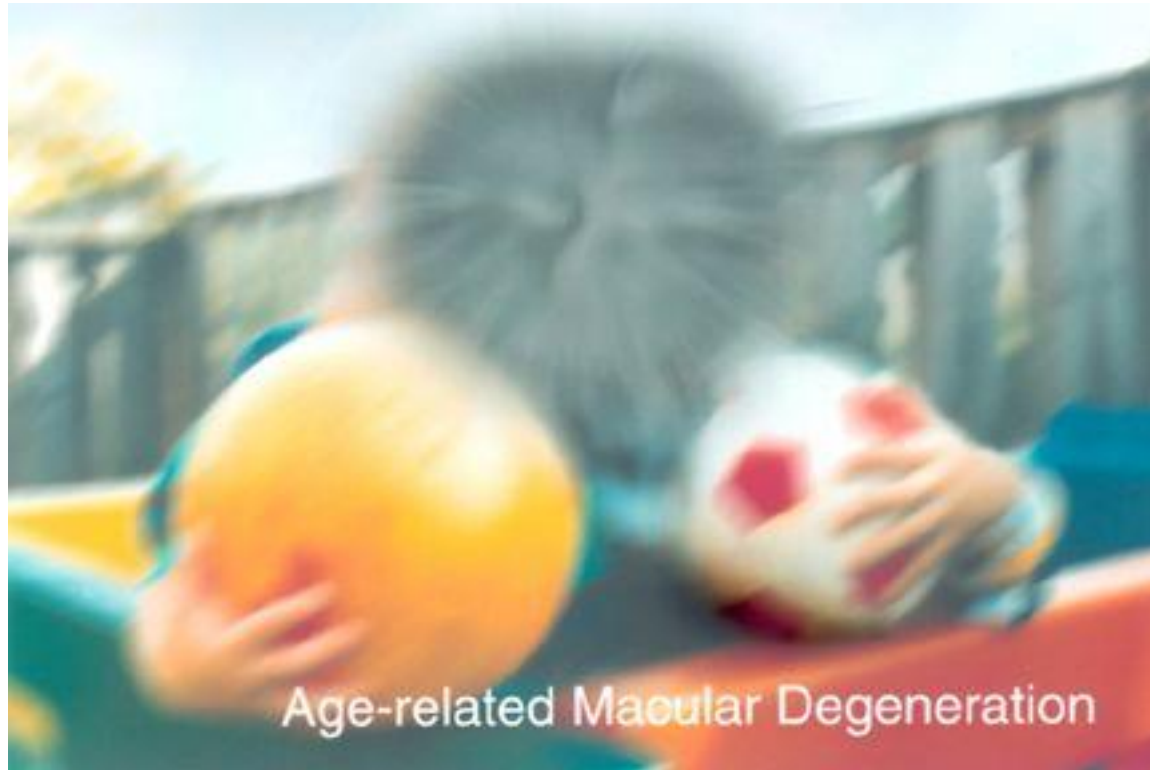
- Accounts for 10% of all incidents of macular degeneration but 90% of severe vision loss
- Occurs when the underlying blood vessels break through the membrane separating the layers and grow into the macula
- Medical treatment is available to halt the growth of these blood vessels



# Normal Vision



# Macular Degeneration



Age-related Maocular Degeneration

# Cataract

- Is the clouding of the lens of the eye that most often occurs as part of the natural aging process
- 33% of people over 65 will develop cataracts, increasing to 50% by the time they are 75.
- Surgical removal of the cataract can restore vision
- Cataract surgery is the most common surgery done

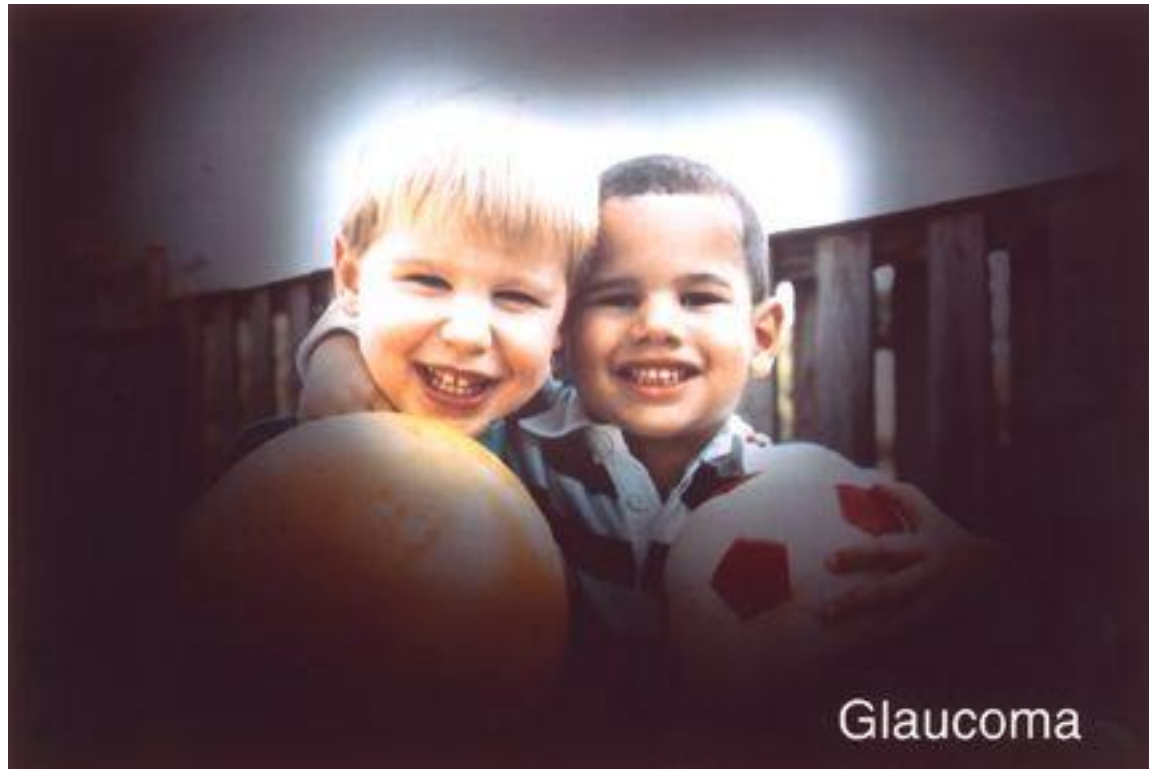
# Cataract



# Glaucoma

- Increased eye pressure causing damage to the delicate optic nerve
- One in 100 Canadians over the age of 40 will have glaucoma
- There are no symptoms of chronic glaucoma until significant damage is done
- Routine screening for glaucoma is part of your regular check-up by an eye doctor

# Glaucoma



# Diabetic Retinopathy

- Fluctuations in blood sugar levels causing abnormal blood vessels to grow
- Vision becomes patchy with multiple blind spots
- Most will develop diabetic changes after 20 years
- Early treatment can reduce the risk of blindness by 95%

# Diabetic Retinopathy





# What Should You Be Doing?

- See your eye doctor once a year, or as he/she recommends
- Follow treatment plan
- If you suffer from vision loss, seek help in dealing with it

# Help Is Available at CNIB

## Our Mission Statement:

To be the leader in promoting vision health and enhancing independence for people with vision loss

# Ways We Can Help

- Low vision enhancement
- Independent living skills
- Safe travel techniques
- Adjustment to vision loss
- Career and employment counseling

# How to Access CNIB Services

- Anyone who is experiencing difficulty because of their vision can use our services
- Pick up the phone and give us a call
- Referral from your eye doctor

# About the Centre for Healthy Aging at Providence (CHAP)

- Based at Providence Health Care (network of Catholic Hospitals in Vancouver)
- CHAP works with organizations to improve the delivery of care for seniors in BC
- CHAP conducts research and translates findings to influence health care system change on behalf of seniors

# Why Eye Health?

- Recognizing the importance of eye health and how poorly seniors access eye health services (especially those in LTC), CHAP conducted research to understand the prevalence of low vision in frail elders
- CHAP partnered with UBC, St. Paul's Hospital & CNIB to conduct research on eye health in Vancouver
- Based on the results of the research, partnered with CNIB to address some of the issues identified

# Thank you!



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