



# How well **do** you see?

## About Presbyopia: “The Aging Eye”

### What is presbyopia?

Presbyopia is an eye condition that occurs as the natural part of aging. It involves the gradual loss of the eye’s ability to actively focus on close objects, such as smart phones, computers, books and menus.<sup>1</sup> The first signs of presbyopia are eyestrain, difficulty seeing in dim light, and problems focusing on small objects and/or fine print.<sup>1</sup>

The eye condition, by nature, is unique due to its ability to affect people who have never previously had the need for vision correction. Once a person is in their 40s, it is likely they will experience presbyopia.<sup>1</sup> Worldwide, nearly 1.7 billion people experience vision issues due to presbyopia, and this number is expected to soar to more than 2 billion by 2020.<sup>2</sup> Despite the growing number of people around the world with the condition, very few think or know to initiate discussions with their eye care professional (ECP) about these changes in their vision.

### What are the causes and symptoms of presbyopia?

Just like wrinkles, presbyopia will affect everyone at some point in their life. Symptoms of the condition can occur differently in each individual, but commonly include:<sup>3</sup>

- The need to hold reading material at arm’s length
- Blurred vision at a normal reading distance
- Headaches or fatigue from doing close work

Presbyopia is believed to stem from a gradual thickening and loss of flexibility of the natural crystalline lens inside the eye. The condition differs from astigmatism, nearsightedness and farsightedness, which are related to curvature of the cornea or the length of the eye ball.

### How is presbyopia diagnosed and corrected?

Presbyopia can be detected by a complete eye exam. The condition is not a disease, so it cannot be cured; however, an ECP can recommend vision correction options, including eye glasses, contact lenses or refractive surgery. Because presbyopia can occur simultaneously with other common vision conditions, such as nearsightedness, farsightedness and astigmatism, an ECP will determine which option is best for clear and comfortable vision.<sup>4</sup>

1. Mayo Clinic, Presbyopia. <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/presbyopia/DS00589> [Accessed July 1, 2014]

2. Market Scope, Global Presbyopia-Correcting Surgery Market Report, April 2012 [Accessed July 1, 2014]

3. WebMD, Presbyopia and Your Eyes. <http://www.webmd.com/eye-health/eye-health-presbyopia-eyes> [Accessed July 1, 2014]

4. American Optometric Association, Presbyopia. <https://www.aoa.org/patients-and-public/eye-and-vision-problems/glossary-of-eye-and-vision-conditions/presbyopia?sso=y> [Accessed July 1, 2014]