

Lifestyle Changes for Adapting to Wet AMD

At-home user guide

Easy room-by-room suggestions
to adapt your home for living
with wet age-related macular
degeneration (wet AMD)



Making Your Home Work for You

Living with wet AMD means you may need to adapt as your vision changes. And a life well lived begins in the home—the place where you feel most comfortable and in control. Let us show you some tips that you may find helpful and that fit your lifestyle.

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How to Adapt Your Home

Safety Tips



When you have wet AMD, small lifestyle changes can make a big impact on your safety. Discover all the simple lifestyle updates you can make to help improve visibility in your home.

Contrast & Colour



Go bold! When it comes to colour, bright is better than pastel. So is playing off light and dark. Use specific colours and contrast to your advantage throughout your home.

Lighting



Let's brighten things up! The right kind of lighting and even light bulbs can really change the way you see around the house.

It is important to adapt your space for life with wet AMD. Each adaptation tip is an essential part of making your home work better for you. Using these tips, this guide will provide helpful suggestions on how to adapt things room by room.

Organization



Become a master organizer. When you reduce clutter, use bold labelling, and create a system of putting things back in the same place, you'll have an easier time finding everything.

Low-Vision Tools



You may already have things around the house that can make living in your home safer and easier. Coloured tape, egg cartons, and even sticky notes can do wonders. We'll show you how.

The Kitchen

For many, the kitchen is the centre of the home. It's where culinary magic happens. It's where people gather. It's also where safety is essential, where little changes can make a big difference, and where you may be able to finally justify getting some new dishes and gadgets.



Lifestyle changes for your kitchen

Making small modifications and adding some new tools can make navigating your kitchen safer and easier. Larger-print measuring cups, timers, and coloured chopping boards may help bring the fun back to cooking.

Safety Tips



- **Use non-skid rugs:** Use a non-skid kitchen rug or use double-sided tape to secure rugs and mats.
- **Avoid complex patterns:** Solid-coloured flooring is easier to distinguish and can help with depth perception and avoiding slips.
- **Label frequently used settings:** Use coloured stickers or tape to label frequently used settings on appliances.
- **Use a finger guard or glove for cutting:** Protect your fingers while you cut or chop with a finger guard or cut-resistant glove.

Organization



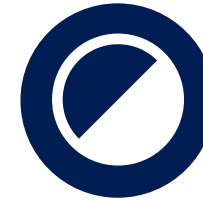
- **Use labels to identify things:** Large stickers, or even handwritten index cards, can help you distinguish pantry items.
- **Store things in the same place:** Create a system and a sense of consistency by always placing certain kitchen items in the same place so you know where to find them.
- **Create voice memos instead:** Organize your shopping list using a voice recorder instead of jotting it down on paper.

Low-Vision Tools



- **Use an audible liquid-level indicator:** These battery-operated gadgets can alert you with sound when your dish or cup is full.

Contrast & Colour



- **Use solid-coloured dishware:** Avoid using clear glass or patterned dishes, and opt for dishes in solid, bright colours.
- **Use a high-contrast cutting board:** Use a cutting board in a high-contrast colour to help clearly define your workspace.
- **Define areas with high-contrast tape:** Mark things like cabinet edges with brightly coloured tape to easily detect when a cabinet is open.
- **Use solid-coloured contrasting placemats:** Use solid-coloured placemats that contrast with the colour of your dishware.

Lighting



- **Introduce focused task lighting:** Use task lighting in areas where you prepare food. Install under-the-cabinet lights for added brightness.
- **Reduce glare from windows:** Help to avoid sun reflections from windows by installing adjustable blinds, shades, or curtains.
- **Use an illuminated magnifier:** Use a lighted magnifier to help enlarge and brighten text.

- **Use voice-activated kitchen devices:** Many kitchen devices don't require reading and can actually speak back to you, like thermometers and timers.



The Bathroom

Most of our daily rituals begin and end in the bathroom. It's a personal space we can't live without. So, it's essential that it works for you. Thankfully, with just a few adjustments, you can make this room in your home easier to use every day.

You can do this

Focus on what you can do, and try not to let what's outside your control affect your attitude.

Safety Tips



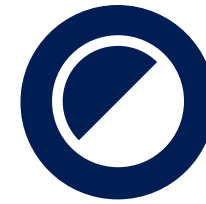
- **Use non-skid mats and rugs:** Rubber-backed bath mats and rugs can help prevent slips. You can also secure your existing rugs with double-sided tape.
- **Install safety handrails:** Safety bars in your shower and near your toilet can help if you ever lose your balance.
- **Use an electric razor instead:** Standard razors leave you more prone to getting cuts.
- **Install a night light:** Install an “auto-on” night light in your bathroom to help you find your way.

Organization



- **Use a shower caddy:** Group your shower items in a caddy to help keep your most used items in one place.
- **Use different-shaped bottles:** Put your shampoo and conditioner in differently sized or shaped bottles to help differentiate them.

Contrast & Colour



- **Define the edge of your bathtub:** Apply a strip of high-contrast coloured tape along the edge of your bathtub to help define where it begins and ends.
- **Use bright, high-contrast accessories:** Use high-contrast bath mats, towels, soap dispensers, non-slip shower decals, and even toilet seats to more clearly define things.
- **Use a coloured sponge to gauge water level:** If you take baths often or hand-wash things in your bathroom sink, use a bright-coloured sponge to help gauge the water level.

Lighting



- **Add additional lighting above your tub or shower:** Shower areas can be dark. If possible, add additional lighting (even battery-powered lights can work) over your tub or shower.
- **Use a lighted magnification mirror:** Lighted mirrors that offer magnification can help when applying makeup or when shaving.
- **Buy an audible scale:** Purchase a bathroom scale that speaks to you.

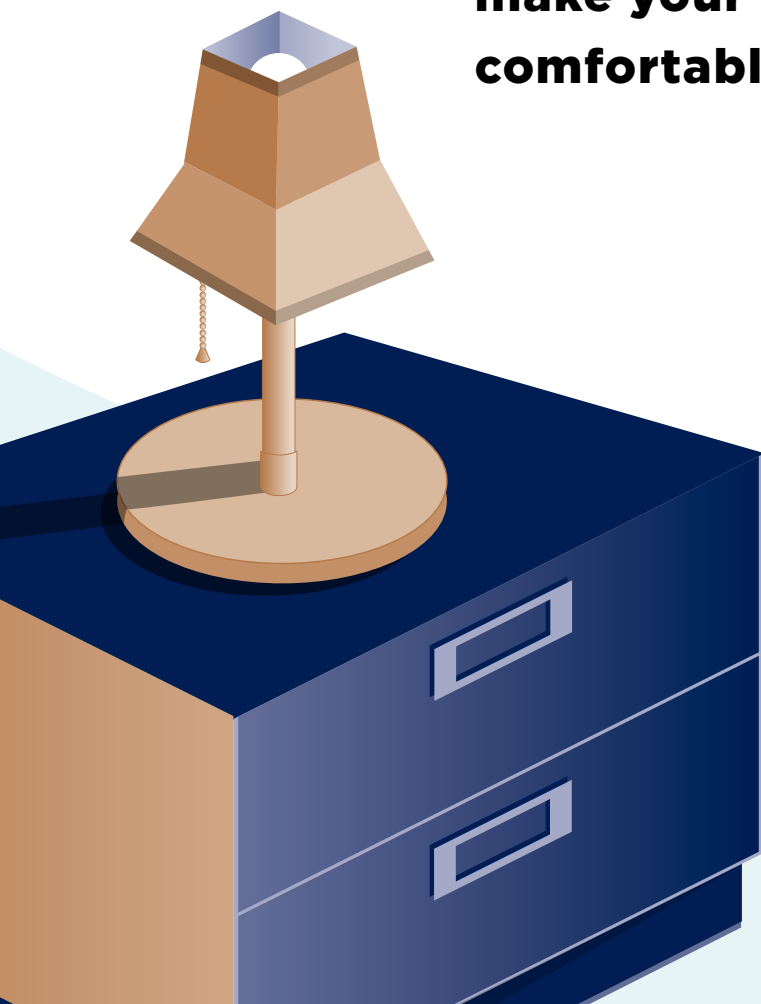
Low-Vision Tools



- **Use a toilet seat frame:** Incorporating a toilet seat frame with arms along either side can be helpful while using the bathroom.

The Bedroom

There is almost no other place in the home that's more personal than your bedroom. And it's the last place where you want to feel out of your element. Discover how even the subtlest of changes can make your bedroom one of the most comfortable in your home.



You can do this

Implementing slight adjustments and rearrangements in your bedroom may make it the most comfortable room in your home. Reducing clutter, adding larger-display or talking clocks, and having adjustable lights may provide the space you need for a comfortable bedroom.

Safety Tips



- **Create clear pathways:** Arrange bedroom furniture in such a way that there's a clear, wide path to access everything.
- **Remove or secure area rugs:** Area rugs can be hazardous. Either make sure they're secured or remove them altogether.
- **Wear non-skid slippers:** Make sure the slippers, or shoes for that matter, that you wear around the house have proper traction and support.

Organization



- **Use drawer dividers:** Add drawer dividers (you can even make your own out of cardboard) to make things easier to find.
- **Organize clothes by outfit:** Save yourself the hassle of putting together outfits by pre-assembling them on one hanger.
- **Use small bags to organize accessories:** Make it easier to find jewellery by storing things in clearly labelled plastic bags.
- **Group clothing by colour:** An easy way to organize your closet is to create a system by keeping certain types of clothing together and grouping them by colour.

Contrast & Colour



- **Incorporate contrast into textiles:** The greater the contrast, the easier it is to see. Try to incorporate contrast when choosing a bedspread or sheets.
- **Use high-contrast tape to highlight things:** Apply high-contrast tape to things like blind pulls, drawer handles, and even the edges of light switches and outlets to make them easier to see.
- **Incorporate solid, bright colours:** Solid, bright colours such as red or yellow can be easier to see than pastels.

Lighting



- **Help control glare:** Adjustable blinds, shades, and curtains can help you control glare in your bedroom.
- **Use bedside task lighting:** If you like to read in bed, use a bright task light on your bedside table or clipped to your headboard.
- **Put a flashlight next to your bed:** Having a flashlight at hand can help light the way when you need to go to the bathroom.
- **Use a night light:** Place a night light in your bedroom that automatically turns on when it's dark to help light high-traffic areas.

Low-Vision Tools



- **Use a talking clock:** Standard clocks can be hard to read. Use a talking clock or one with a large display to help tell the time.

- **Use a large-button telephone:** Get a large-button telephone to put on your bedside table for easy dialing in case of an emergency.

The Living Room

The living room—it's where we relax, entertain, and sometimes even work. As someone with wet AMD, you may think, what better excuse for splurging on that new, larger TV? Don't let us stop you, but you really don't have to go to that extreme. With just a few adjustments, you can make this room a more comfortable place to enjoy.

Use tools to your advantage

Learning to use low-vision devices can help you adapt your lifestyle to changing vision.



Safety Tips



- **Try to avoid low-level objects:** Coffee tables can be hazardous. If you must have one, try one with rounded edges.
- **Mind your cords and cables:** Whether it's a lamp or a fan that's plugged in, be mindful of keeping cords tucked away.
- **Remove or secure area rugs:** If your room has an area rug, consider removing it altogether or secure it with tape.

Organization



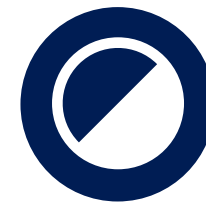
- **Create a storage system:** Store and return your frequently used items like remotes, keys, or mobile phones in the same location.
- **Clear the way:** Arrange your furniture to allow for 3-foot-wide paths around your room.

Low-Vision Tools



- **Install low-vision software:** There are many programs you can install to help magnify text, adjust contrast, and incorporate text-to-speech.
- **Use oversized accessories:** Get help with typing and viewing with a large-button keyboard and an oversized monitor.

Contrast & Colour



- **Choose high-contrast furniture:** Your furniture should contrast with your floor and should be solid-coloured, not patterned.
- **Use bright tape, sticky notes, and labels:** A roll of bright tape can help define sharp edges. Fluorescent sticky notes and labels are great for identifying files.

Lighting



- **Use targeted lighting:** Use gooseneck lamps for targeted needs like reading, as well as bright overhead lights.
- **Avoid glare:** Prevent glare by using adjustable curtains or blinds, and position your TV away from windows and bright lights.

- **Consider getting a smart home device:** These voice-activated devices can help with home activities, reading, researching, and more.
- **Keep magnifying glasses handy:** Having magnifying glasses at different strengths nearby can help with different types of tasks like reading or watching TV.

Hallways & Stairways

They're easy to overlook, but the good news is, there are some simple ways you can optimize hallways and stairways to be safer and easier to get around.



Resources available to you

Fortunately, there are lifestyle steps individuals with wet AMD can take to make sure their home remains a safe place. Follow the tips in this resource guide, talk with your eye care professional, and reach out to related organizations for help.

Safety Tips



- **Line the edges of stairs with bright tape:** Use a roll of high-contrast, non-slip tape to help mark the edges.
- **Keep furniture to a minimum:** Try to avoid placing any furniture in hallway areas. The fewer things in your path, the better.
- **Install handrails on both sides:** Handrails on both sides of your stairways can help you keep your balance and stay steady.

Organization



- **Eliminate clutter:** Make sure hallways and walkways are clear of any clutter, like loose umbrellas, shoes, and more.
- **Store often-used items in the same place:** If you typically store your keys at the top of your stairs, make a point to always store them in the same place.

Contrast & Colour



- **Use high-contrast light switch plates:** Install light switch plates that contrast with your wall colour to more easily spot them.
- **Paint your handrails, stairs, or walls:** High-contrast coloured paint applied on stairs and handrails can serve as an important safety cue.

Lighting



- **Keep flashlights and night lights handy:** Use “auto-on” night lights where possible and keep flashlights nearby.
- **Keep the lights bright:** Make sure your hallways and stairways have plenty of overhead light.



Low-Vision Tools

- **Install magnetic door stops:** Install magnetic door stops to help keep stairways and hallways open.

- **Use motion-sensing stair lights:** These types of lights sense motion and can automatically turn on when you reach a certain stair.

Product Checklist

Specific products, devices, and even everyday items around your home can really help you optimize your space as your vision changes. Discover helpful tools you can use in every room.

Kitchen

Things you may already have:

- ☐ Coloured stickers or nail polish to label appliance dials and settings
- ☐ High-contrast tape to mark cabinet edges, doors, and switches
- ☐ White coffee mugs
- ☐ Solid, dark-coloured placemats
- ☐ Flashlight



Things you may want to buy:

- ☐ High-contrast measuring cups, cutting boards, and dishware
- ☐ Under-the-cabinet LED task lights
- ☐ Audible liquid level indicator
- ☐ Audible and large-type kitchen timer and thermometer
- ☐ Finger guard or cut-resistant gloves
- ☐ High-lumen light bulbs

Bathroom

Things you may already have:

- ☐ Coloured sponges to gauge water levels
- ☐ White labels for medications
- ☐ Different-shaped bottles for shampoo and conditioner
- ☐ “Auto-on” night light

Things you may want to buy:

- ☐ Non-slip bath mats and shower decals
- ☐ High-contrast toilet seat
- ☐ Magnification spot mirror
- ☐ High-lumen light bulbs
- ☐ Audible scale



Bedroom

Things you may already have:



Safety pins for grouping socks or labelling clothes



Egg cartons or sandwich bags for storing jewellery



Cardboard strips or shoe boxes for dividing drawers



High-contrast tape for marking knobs, pulls, switches, and doors



Flashlight



“Auto-on” night light

Things you may want to buy:



High-contrast switch plate for light switch



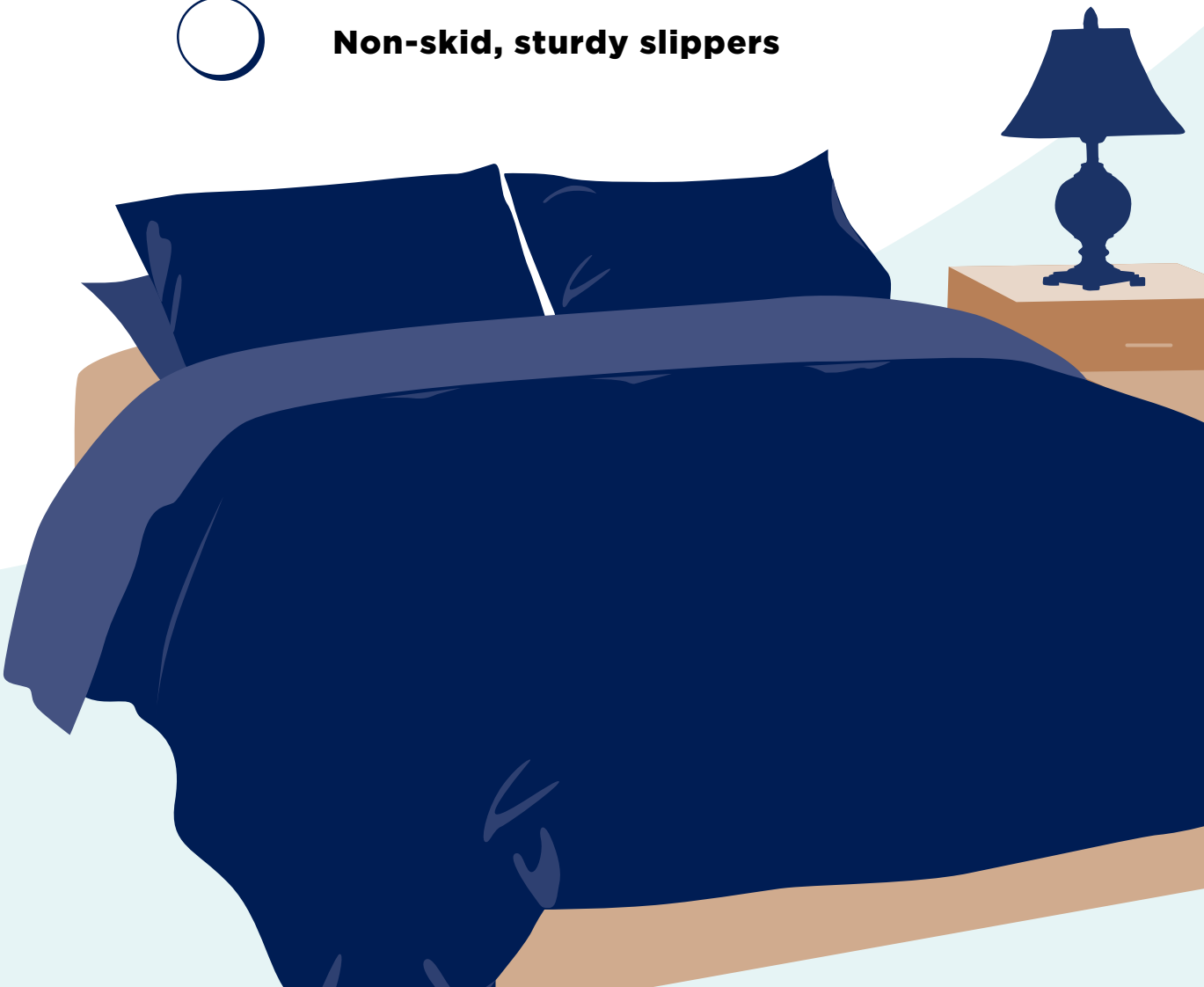
High-lumen light bulbs



Bright task light or clip-on lamp



Non-skid, sturdy slippers



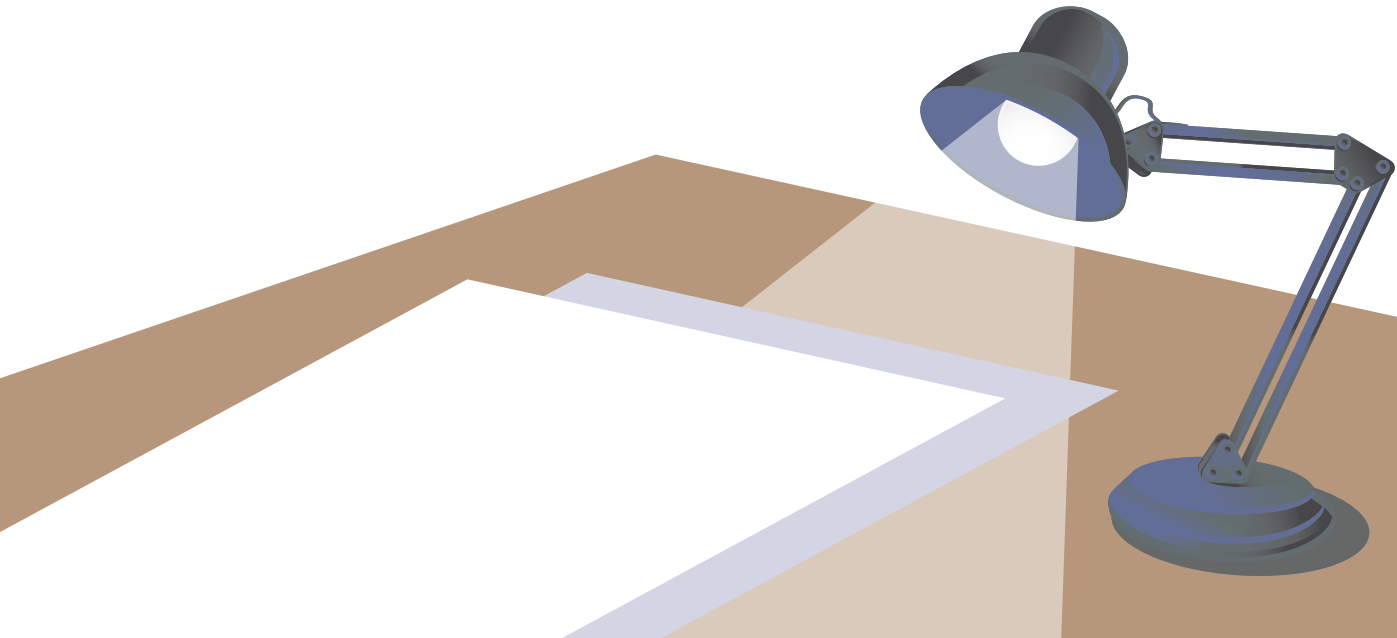
Living Room

Things you may already have:

- ☐ **Bright-coloured sticky notes and storage trays**
- ☐ **High-contrast tape for labelling things**
- ☐ **Flashlight**
- ☐ **Illuminated or handheld magnifier**
- ☐ **High-contrast throw blanket to drape on sofa or chairs**

Things you may want to buy:

- ☐ **High-lumen light bulbs**
- ☐ **Gooseneck task light**
- ☐ **Smart home device**
- ☐ **Large-button telephone**
- ☐ **Low-vision computer software**
- ☐ **High-contrast pens with dark black ink**
- ☐ **Metal or plastic writing guides**



Hallways & Stairways

Things you may already have:



“Auto-on” night lights



Bright-coloured, non-slip tape for stair edges



High-contrast paint or tape for handrails and stairs



Flashlight

Things you may want to buy:



Magnetic door stops



High-contrast light switch plate



Motion-sensing stair lights



Wet AMD Resources

Looking for more information? See below. And remember, always be sure to talk to your doctor if you experience any changes in your vision.



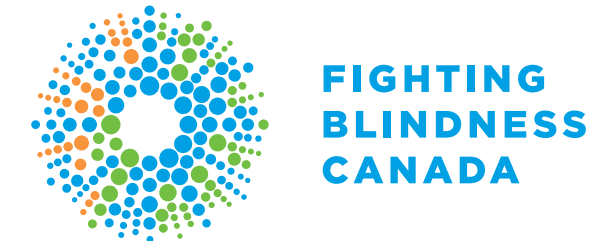
CCB | ccbnational.net

The Canadian Council of the Blind (CCB) is a membership-based not-for-profit organization that brings together Canadians who are blind, deaf-blind, or living with vision loss to share common interests and social activities. This material has been reviewed by CCB. For more information please visit www.ccbnational.net, or feel free to call 1-877-304-0968 or email ccb@ccbnational.net.



CNIB | cnib.ca

The Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) is a non-profit organization that delivers innovative programs and powerful advocacy to help tear down barriers to inclusion for people impacted by blindness.



FBC | fightingblindness.ca

Fighting Blindness Canada (FBC) is Canada's leading private funder of vision research, raising and stewarding funds to support essential, sight-saving research. For more information on age-related macular degeneration and your diagnosis, visit www.fightingblindness.ca/eye-diseases-pathways. For assistance navigating educational resources, contact the Health Information Officer by calling 1-888-626-2995 or emailing healthinfo@fightingblindness.ca.



Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada | visionlossrehab.ca

Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada is a health services organization that provides training that enables people who are blind or partially sighted to develop or restore key daily living skills.

