

Care for the Visually Impaired

Patients that are either born with or have deteriorating visual acuity will need specific teaching and assessments done. If the patient becomes hospitalized, when admitted describe the room to them, so they can create a visual or mental image of the room. New environments can increase the risk of falling and make sure the room is free of clutter.



PLAY PICMONIC

Assessment

Decreased Visual Acuity

[Down-arrow Eye Accuracy](#)

As a patient ages certain diseases can cause a patient to have a decrease in visual acuity. Diseases affecting vision are cataracts, glaucoma, and diabetic retinopathy. Always ask the patient how well they can see, if they see shapes, colors, or shadows.

Snellen Chart

[Snail-Ellen Chart](#)

Used to assess a patient's visual acuity. Have the patient stand 20 feet away, starting with the first line have them read you the letters.

Status of Corrective Lenses

[Broken Glasses](#)

If a patient has corrective lenses, have them remove them for the initial part of the vision test, and then have them repeat the test with the corrective lenses.

Nursing Considerations

Sighted-Guide Technique

[Eye-Guide dog](#)

Assist the patient while ambulating. Offer your arm for them to hold and describe your movement and any upcoming objects.

Communication

[Telephone Communicating](#)

Do not rely on non-verbal communication or gestures to communicate with the patient. Verbalize everything and print information in black and white with large font.

Safe Environment

[Safe-house](#)

Educate the patient to keep their house well lit, have unbreakable dishes, and use large print labels. Make sure rugs are secure and their environment is free of clutter.

Medications

[Med-bottle](#)

Educate the patient that is able to still see color, to have different medications in different colored pill bottles. Inform them of different technology that provides auditory information, such as a smartphone telling the patient the time.

Clock Technique for Food

[Clock with Food](#)

When placing food in front of the patient describe the location of the food by imagining the plate is a clock. Example: the french fries are at 2 o'clock, the steak pieces at 6 o'clock, and the broccoli at 10 o'clock.

Activities of Daily Living (ADL)

[Tools for Daily Living](#)

It is important to teach family members to keep household items in the same location, so the patient knows where they are. Buy books in large print or Braille, and keep the floors free of clutter.