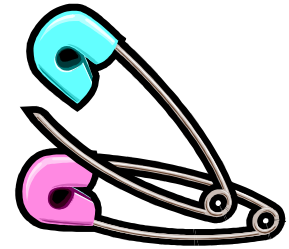


# "LIVING" WITH LESS SIGHT

## *There Are Ways For Seniors To Enhance Their Independence*

There are about 7.3 million seniors (65+) who are blind or visually impaired. Of course, this creates limitations for them. However, with planning, education/training, a willingness to change and desire, many of these seniors retain their independence - as much as safely possible. Oh, it may be a struggle at first. Denial, compensation and fear are common initial responses to the loss of sight. These reactions can lead to a lack of confidence, depression, family arguments and accidents.

To overcome (or avoid) these situations, seniors and their loved ones need to understand their limitations, as well as what is possible. This can be done with the help of training classes and tapes, counseling and support groups. With this added knowledge and the use of adaptive devices (magnifying glasses, canes, etc.), families can usually create an environment that offers more independence than they expected.



*To help with dressing, identify clothing with safety pins or other "touchable" markers. A waistband with a pin at a 45° angle could mean the pants are blue.*

## AIDING LOW VISION

Here are some suggestions to make life easier for someone with impaired vision.

- ◆ Maximize one's vision by supplying lots of light and reducing glare.
- ◆ Add contrasting colors to make important items (doors, stairs, hazards and obstacles, plates and glasses, foods, light switches, etc.) easier to find, recognize, use and/or avoid.
- ◆ Be consistent with where you place objects and how you do things. And don't move objects around, unless necessary and you inform the person with low vision.
- ◆ Set the table the same way every meal. And explain where the food is on the meal plate by using the clock method. *"Your potatoes are at 3 o'clock"*.
- ◆ Many magazines and books can be found in large print. And computer screens can be adjusted for more contrast and bigger text.

## "SEEING" BY TOUCH

When a person has little or no vision, in certain situations their sense of touch may substitute for their sight. Here are some simple suggestions for making it easier to get a feel for everyday things.

- ◆ Coins can be identified by width, thickness and the type of edge. Each denomination of paper money can be folded a different way.
- ◆ When pouring liquids into a glass, place your index finger over the edge of the cup or glass. When the liquid comes close to the top, you will feel it and stop pouring. (You can also use a "Say Stop" sensor that hangs on the side of a glass.)
- ◆ Objects can be marked with tactile (feel-oriented) indicators. For example, you can glue a piece of felt (or drill a hole through) all the pieces in one color of checkers.

**Note:** For many seniors, the sense of touch in the fingertips may have diminished over time.

(Sources: Braille Institute, American Foundation for the Blind)



### *Keepsake Companions*

Improving Lives, One Household At A Time

[www.KeepsakeCompanions.com](http://www.KeepsakeCompanions.com)

**(800) 505-1730**

Suite 11  
7128 Miramar Rd.,  
San Diego, CA 92121