

# The aging special senses

Life



Vanessa McClain Anatomy and Physiology GE 258 Unit 9. Assignment 2. The Aging Special Senses Thursday, November 17, 2011 1. ) Age-related Macular Disease - Is a disease associated with aging that gradually destroys sharp, central vision. Central vision is needed for seeing objects clearly and for common daily tasks such as reading and driving. AMD affects the macula, the part of the eye that allows you to see fine detail. There are two forms of age-related macular degeneration: Dry form and Wet form. The dry form is characterized by the presence of yellow deposits, called drusen, in the macula.

A few drusen may not cause change in vision; however, as they grow in size and increase in number, they may lead to a dimming or distortion of vision that people find most noticeable when they read. In more advanced stages, there is also a thinning of the light-sensitive layer of cells in the macula leading to atrophy, or tissue death. In the atrophic form, patients may have blind spots in the center of their vision. The wet form is characterized by the growth of abnormal blood vessels from the choroid underneath the macula.

These blood vessels leak blood and fluid into the retina, causing distortion of vision that makes straight lines look wavy, as well as blind spots and loss of central vision. They eventually scar, leading to permanent loss of central vision. They affect daily life in that there is struggle to do housework, studying, shopping, enjoying leisure activities and interests such as reading.

2. ) Glaucoma - Is a disease in which damage to the optic nerve leads to progressive, irreversible vision loss because the aqueous humor does not flow out of the eye properly and fluid pressure builds up over time causing damage to the optic nerve.

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It is the second leading cause of blindness. It affects one's daily life such as driving or playing certain sports . It causes contrast sensitivity, problems with glare, and light sensitivity which interfere with daily activities. 3. )

Cataracts - Are cloudy areas in the lens inside the eye which is normally clear. There are two types: Age related cataracts which appear later in life and congenital cataracts, that may be present when a baby is born or shortly after birth. Cataracts cause an individual to see halos around lights. In some, the glare from car lights become bothersome and driving at night may be dangerous. Although far sight is affected more than near vision. If the cataracts are bad enough, it can make reading more difficult as well. 4. )

Detached Retina - Is a disorder of the eye in which the retina peels away from its underlying layer of support tissue. Initial detachment may be localized, but without rapid treatment the entire retina may detach, leading to vision loss and blindness. It affects daily activities because of the sudden appearance of " floaters", (dark, semi-transparent, floating shapes) in the field of vision or a shower of black dots. These are actually red blood cells because all retinal tears bleed a little when they occur. ) It causes a loss of central vision, a loss of peripheral vision called the " curtain effect" and brief, bright flashes of light which may be most noticeable when you move your eyes in the dark. 5. ) Deafness (sensorineural and conductive) -

Sensorineural hearing loss is due to damage to the pathway that sound impulses take from the hair cells of the inner ear to the auditory nerve and the brain. Conductive hearing loss is caused by anything that interferes with the transmission of sound from the outer to the inner ear.

Both of these hearing losses affect daily life because you may experience difficulty localizing sounds or understanding speech in busy environments and participating in everyday normal conversations which can lead to social isolation, frustration, tension, anger, stress and depression. 6. ) Meniere's Disease - Is a disorder of the inner ear that can affect hearing and balance to a varying degree. It is characterized by episodes of vertigo and tinnitus and progressive hearing loss, though usually in one ear. It affects daily life because for some, sounds appear tiny or distorted and may experience unusual sensitivity to noises.

In addition, you may experience a sensation of fullness or pressure in one or both ears and unilateral or bilateral tinnitus. Some may have parasitic symptoms, which aren't necessarily symptoms of Meniere's, but rather side effects from other symptoms. Typically these are nausea, vomiting and sweating. 7. ) Ataxia - Is an inability to coordinate muscle activity during voluntary movement, most often results from disorders of the cerebellum or the posterior columns of the spinal cord; may involve the limbs, head or trunk. Affects one's daily life because it can alter a person's walking pattern. For e. . wide based unsteady gait with difficulty stopping, turning and problem walking in poorly lit areas. It can cause falls due to postural instability, difficulty with tasks requiring fine control and coordination, tremors during voluntary movement, slurred speech and altered handwriting. 8. ) Hypsomniasia - literally means "less" sleep. It is a condition whereby a person does not need as much sleep as a normal individual. Specifically, they sleep less than 6 hours per night, but are adequately

rested. It may occur at the onset, during or at the termination of sleep, and is common among the elderly.

It affects daily life because the person that sleeps less but feels they need more experience the same problems as the person with insomnia that cannot sleep more than a few hours but feel they need more. It affects everyday life and activities because it is usually accompanied by general emotional upset, depression, or anxiety. References Conductive and Sensorineural hearing loss | Hearing Aid Know. (n. d. ). Hearing aids - hearing loss - help, information and blog - hear aids | Hearing Aid Know. Retrieved November 13, 2011, from <http://www.hearingaidknow.com/2007/10/25/conductive-and-sensorineural-hearing-loss/>

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