

EDITORIAL

Sharper Vision, Safer Care: Innovations Driving Modern Ophthalmology

★ Transforming Vision Care with Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence is reshaping ophthalmology, enabling eye doctors to personalize care for patients with conditions such as age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and diabetic retinopathy. By analysing complex eye scans, A.I systems can detect disease earlier, predict risk, and guide treatment decisions with unprecedented accuracy.

In recent years, eye care has been revolutionized by rapid technological advancements. Patients now benefit from faster diagnostics, minimally invasive procedures, and safer, more effective treatments. Telehealth and remote monitoring, accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic, continue to expand access to care, ensuring patients receive timely support even outside the clinic.

At Sankar Foundation, we are committed to harnessing these innovations to preserve vision and improve quality of life. From A.I-powered diagnostics to robotic-assisted surgeries, modern ophthalmology is entering a new era.

According to **National Institute of Health**, Key breakthroughs include:

◆ **Artificial Intelligence & Diagnostics:** Automated screening for diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, and AMD allowing for early detection and wider access to care.

Minimally Invasive Glaucoma Surgery (MIGS): Technics using Tiny stents and precision tools reduce trauma and recovery time.

◆ **Advanced Cataract & Refractive Surgery:** Femtosecond lasers are enhancing precision in cataract removal and corneal reshaping and premium extended depth-of-focus lenses deliver sharper vision.

◆ **3D Visualization & Imaging:** Three-dimensional systems are increasing precision during complex vitreoretinal surgeries, improving the visibility of intraocular tissues and detailed monitoring through fundus photography.

◆ **Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT):** OCT is one of the most ground breaking diagnostic tools in ophthalmology. This non-invasive imaging technique provides high-resolution, cross-sectional images of the retina. It allows eye doctors to detect early signs of conditions like macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and glaucoma, often before any noticeable symptoms appear.

◆ **Gene Therapy & Robotics:** Novel gene therapies are emerging to treat inherited retinal diseases, such as Leber congenital amaurosis, by repairing or replacing defective genes.

These innovations are not only improving treatment options but also enhancing the patient experience through:

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K. Ranganathan
 EDITOR

TOP VIEW Your Eyes Are Warning You: Don't Miss the Silent Signs

Eye health is often pushed aside until vision problems begin to disrupt daily life. Too often, people dismiss early symptoms as simple fatigue, ageing, or too much screen time. But the truth is stark: **your eyes can quietly signal serious health conditions long before vision loss becomes obvious.**

According to World Health Organisation's (WHO) the latest fact sheet, the **global burden** is staggering:

- ◆ **43 million people are blind**
- ◆ **295 million live with moderate to severe visual impairment (MSVI)**
- ◆ **258 million have mild visual impairment**
- ◆ **2.2 billion people struggle with near or distance vision impairment**

Even more alarming — over 90% of vision loss is preventable. According to Dr. Rishi Raj Borah, Country Director of Orbis (India), **"It is a need of the hour to recognise these warning signs, as early detection plays a crucial role in preventing long-term vision impairment."**



Many people ignore red or watery eyes, assuming it is due to dust or allergies

5 Silent Eye Symptoms You Should Never Ignore

Persistent Blurred or Fluctuating Vision Occasional blur after screen time is normal. But frequent shifts between clear and blurry vision may signal refractive errors, early cataracts, or even diabetes. Sudden blurring in one eye can point to retinal or optic nerve issues — requiring immediate medical attention.

Eye Strain and Headaches Regular headaches or discomfort while reading or working may indicate uncorrected vision problems or poor eye alignment. If these persist, they could be linked to dry eye disease, infections, or inflammation — all of which can escalate if ignored.

Redness and Irritation Red, watery eyes are often brushed off as dust or allergies. But persistent irritation may mean dry eye syndrome, infections, or inflammation. Left untreated, these conditions can damage the eye surface and raise the risk of complications.

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Performance at a Glance

Total Eye Surgeries : 5,13,185 Since Inception
Total Outpatients Screened : 29,81,640 Since Inception

Awareness and Promotion

ALARMING RISE OF MYOPIA IN INDIAN CHILDREN

◆ **A Hidden Epidemic Among Kids**

Myopia, also called near sightedness, is a common eye condition where nearby objects appear clear but distant objects look blurry. It usually develops in childhood and can be managed effectively with eyeglasses, contact lenses, or refractive surgery.

Recent studies show a concerning rise in cases. By 2050, nearly half of urban Indian children might be myopic. Without prompt and coordinated action, India risks facing a silent epidemic that could greatly affect eye health, education, work productivity, and economic growth.

A systematic review and meta-analysis conducted recently among Indian children aged 5–15 found an overall myopia prevalence of 7.5 per cent, showing a clear urban-rural divide. In urban areas, the prevalence was 8.5 per cent compared to 6.1 per cent in rural regions. Data from urban centres reveal a dramatic rise: from 4.44 per cent in 1999 to 21.15 per cent in 2019.

Latest Projections of Myopia rise are even more alarming:

- ◆ 31.9 per cent by 2030
- ◆ 40.0 per cent by 2040
- ◆ 48.1 per cent by 2050

These numbers indicate a growing public health issue and a looming social and economic challenge.

Global Context: In the US and Europe, about 50 per cent of young adults are affected, while in parts of East Asia, rates reach nearly 90 per cent. Blurry distant vision is the main issue, and while genes play a role, the rapid rise points to lifestyle factors. For years, experts blamed too much screen time. But new research from the State University of New York (SUNY) College of Optometry suggests it's not just screens. It's how we use our eyes indoors.

According to **Dr. T. Suparna, Head of Paediatrics & Squint at Sankar Foundation**, the common symptoms of myopia include:

- ◆ Blurred distance vision
- ◆ Squinting to see clearly
- ◆ Eye strain and headaches
- ◆ Children holding objects very close or struggling in school due to poor distance vision

She explains that myopia can be classified into two types:

- ◆ **Low/Moderate Myopia:** Easily corrected with lenses.
- ◆ **High/Pathologic Myopia:** Severe cases that may lead to complications such as retinal detachment, glaucoma, or cataracts.



Dr. T. Suparna examining a young patient during an eye check-up

Causes & Risk Factors

- ◆ **Genetics:** Family history increases risk.
- ◆ **Eye shape:** Eyeball too long or cornea too steeply curved.
- ◆ **Lifestyle:** Excessive near work (reading, screen time) and limited outdoor activity.
- ◆ **Onset:** Often appears between ages 6–14 and may worsen during teenage years before stabilizing in adulthood.

Diagnosis

- ◆ Comprehensive eye exam with visual acuity tests, retinoscopy, or phoropter.
- ◆ Paediatric screenings are important since children may not report blurry vision.

Treatment Options

- ◆ **Eyeglasses:** Most common and effective correction.
- ◆ **Contact lenses:** Provide wider field of vision but require careful hygiene.
- ◆ **Refractive surgery (LASIK, PRK, SMILE):** Permanent correction for adults.
- ◆ **Orthokeratology (Ortho-K):** Special overnight lenses that temporarily reshape the cornea.

- ◆ **Low-dose atropine eye drops (for children):** Can slow progression of myopia.

Prevention & Management

- ◆ Encourage **outdoor time** for children to reduce risk.
- ◆ Limit prolonged screen use and close-up work.
- ◆ Schedule **regular eye exams** to detect changes early.

- ◆ Schedule regular eye exams (every 6–12 months) to monitor progression.

Key takeaway: Myopia is increasingly common worldwide, especially among children, but with early detection and proper management—glasses, contacts, or modern treatments—it can be controlled effectively and risks of complications minimized.

(Insights by K Bangar Raju, Editor with inputs from India Today)

Your eyes show the strength of your soul - Paulo Coelho

WOMEN ARE AT HIGHER RISK OF EYE DISEASE THAN MEN

Women are at a higher risk for sight-threatening eye diseases, vision changes during pregnancy and menopause, and other ocular health issues. To address these concerns, a recent survey provides free educational resources and advocates for equal access to eye care and designed to raise awareness and provide education on vision issues that are unique to women.

As the nation's leading patient advocacy organization dedicated to preventing blindness and preserving sight, Prevent Blindness has once again declared that women face a greater risk of eye disease and certain vision conditions compared to men, the organization offers a wide range of free resources for both consumers and healthcare professionals.

Available materials include: Fact sheets and web pages, Educational videos Social media graphics and Awareness campaigns.

Through these initiatives, Prevent Blindness aims to empower women with knowledge, encourage proactive eye care, and promote equitable access to vision health services.

Autoimmune eye disorders, such as thyroid eye disease, rheumatoid arthritis, and Sjögren's syndrome, occur more frequently in women and can significantly affect ocular health. They are also more likely to develop age-related macular degeneration and its



Women are at a disproportionately higher risk than men for several vision-related conditions

advanced form, geographic atrophy, both of which can lead to irreversible vision loss. In addition, women face greater rates of blindness and severe vision impairment overall, as well as an increased likelihood of glaucoma, a disease that damages the optic nerve. Dry eye disease, often linked to hormonal changes, is another condition that affects women more commonly, contributing to discomfort and reduced quality of life.

Finally, refractive errors including nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism are more prevalent among women, underscoring the importance of regular eye examinations and preventive care. Vision changes due to pregnancy, use of birth control, or menopause Women can help avoid unnecessary

vision impairment by educating themselves about eye diseases and taking preventive steps to protect their eyesight," said Kira Baldonado, Executive Vice President at Prevent Blindness. "Yet, gender inequities in access to quality eye care must be addressed both in the United States and globally to ensure healthy vision is a right for all."

The Eye Health for Women and Girls report from the **International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB)** highlights that women face greater barriers to eye care worldwide. While challenges such as cost, fear of treatment, and distance to facilities affect both men and women, women often encounter additional gender-specific obstacles limited education, reduced decision-making power, restricted financial resources, and lack of household support. These inequities contribute to their higher risk of avoidable blindness.

The initiatives include pioneering volunteer-led glaucoma screening programs, promoting early detection of vision problems, and advancing research on eye disease prevalence. The organization's advocacy has also been instrumental in establishing a vision research and prevention program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

(Insights by **K Bangar Raju**, Editor with inputs from preventblindness.org)

Your Eyes Are Warning You: Don't Miss the Silent Signs

Difficulty with Night Vision and Light Sensitivity Struggling to see at night or experiencing glare could signal early cataracts or retinal changes. These symptoms creep in gradually, often unnoticed until they interfere with daily activities like driving.

Floaters and Flashes Occasional floaters are harmless. But a sudden surge in floaters, flashes of light, or shadowy areas in vision can indicate retinal detachment — a medical emergency that can lead to permanent vision loss if untreated.

Why Early Eye Exams Matter

Eye exams aren't just about updating your glasses. They can uncover silent threats like glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, and hypertensive eye disease. Early detection dramatically improves treatment outcomes and prevents irreversible damage.

Remember: your eyes rarely hurt when something is wrong. That's what makes these silent warning signs so dangerous. If you notice any of them, don't delay professional care. Regular check-ups and timely intervention can safeguard not only your vision but your overall health in long run.

An eye that looks inward reflects the spirit of the soul

(Insights by **K Bangar Raju**, Editor with inputs from Times Now Health)

Innovations Driving Modern Ophthalmology

- ▶ Faster, more accurate diagnoses
- ▶ Earlier disease detection
- ▶ Personalized care plans
- ▶ Improved surgical outcomes

Eye care technology has come a long way from traditional tools like manual eye charts and basic ophthalmoscopes. Today, cutting-edge equipment allows eye specialists to see the inner workings of the eye in unprecedented detail, often detecting problems before they become symptomatic.

At Sankar Foundation, we offer state-of-the-art diagnostics and treatments designed to safeguard your vision for the long term. Don't wait until symptoms appear book your comprehensive eye care consultation today and experience the future of ophthalmology.

BRANDIX EYE CAMP BRINGS VISION TO HUNDREDS

Brandix India, one of India's largest manufacturing hubs located at Atchutapuram in Anakapalle district, partnered with Sankar Foundation organized a free eye screening camp for patients in and around the factory premises on 12th March 2026. The camp witnessed an impressive turnout, with a large number of patients availing themselves of the services.

The camp was formally inaugurated by Sri P.C. Dora Swamy, Brandix India Partner. In his address, Sri Dora Swamy highlighted that Brandix, in association with Sankar Foundation, has successfully conducted 149 eye screening camps over the years, with the mission of eliminating avoidable blindness in society. His active involvement—personally serving food to patients—was warmly appreciated and created a strong sense of connection with the community.

Medical Team and Support

The camp was led by Dr. Shreya Mishra and Dr. Bharathi, who screened patients with the support of Sri K.V. Venugopal Rao, DGM, Sri N. Appala Raju, Senior Manager, Sri Arun Kumar, Manager, Outreach Department, Sri Eswar Rao, Senior Manager, Sri Ramu, Manager, Optical Department, Sri Ratanraju, Manager Optometry. A dedicated team of 35 employees from Sankar Foundation also participated, ensuring smooth organization and patient care throughout the event.

Key Highlights

- ❓ Large patient turnout reflecting strong community trust.
- ❓ 149 camps conducted so far, reinforcing the long-term commitment of Brandix and Sankar Foundation.
- ❖ Active leadership involvement by Sri P.C. Dora Swamy, strengthening patient engagement.



Sri P.C. Dora Swamy engaging with patients during the eye screening camp.



Sri P.C. Dora Swamy personally distributing eyeglasses to patients at the camp.

- ❖ Comprehensive medical support from doctors and staff, ensuring quality eye care delivery.

The selected patients underwent eye surgeries and were dropped back at their destinations.

Camp Fact Sheet

Patients Screened	578
Spot distribution of Spectacles	426
Medicines distributed	144
Selected for eye surgeries	49

SALPG SPONSORED OPERATING MICROSCOPE INAUGURATED

The Operating Microscope and Scope, sponsored by SALPG, was formally inaugurated on 4th April 2026 by Sri P.C. Ramnath, Deputy Manager (CSR), SALPG. This advanced equipment, funded under SALPG's CSR initiative at a cost of Rs. 39 lakhs, represents a major step forward in strengthening eye care services.

On the occasion, Sri A. Krishna Kumar, Managing Trustee, conveyed heartfelt gratitude to SALPG for their unwavering support to Sankar Foundation in its pursuit of excellence.

Advantages of the Operating Microscope

- ❖ **Enhanced Diagnosis:** Enables ophthalmologists to examine eye tissues, corneal layers, and retinal



P.C. Ramnath (3rd from right) with doctors and officials from Sankar Foundation on the occasion.

structures in detail, ensuring accurate identification of conditions.

- ❖ **Precision in Surgery:** Provides magnified views during procedures such as cataract removal or corneal transplants, improving safety and outcomes.

- ❖ **Early Detection:** Subtle abnormalities in cells or tissues can be spotted earlier, allowing timely treatment and preventing vision loss.
- ❖ **Education & Research:** Serves as an essential tool for training medical students and advancing ophthalmology research.

Pathology Support: Facilitates detailed analysis of biopsies and tissue samples, aiding in the detection of infections, tumors, and degenerative diseases, thereby strengthening diagnostic capabilities.

The eyes shout what the lips fear to say – William Henry

CATARACT BLINDNESS IN INDIA: CHALLENGES, SOLUTIONS, AND THE ROAD AHEAD

Introduction :

Cataract remains one of the leading causes of avoidable blindness in India, responsible for nearly 65% of all blindness cases. The burden of cataract-related vision loss is profound it diminishes quality of life, limits independence, and reduces economic productivity.

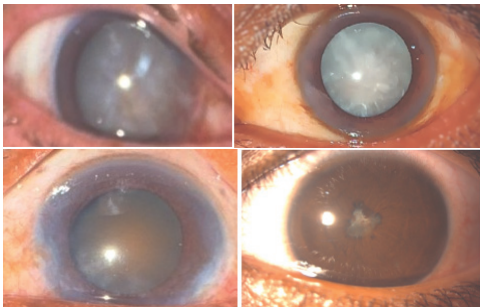
Fortunately, cataract surgery is among the most effective and safest medical procedures available. It restores vision, enhances daily functioning, and significantly improves overall well-being. Timely surgical intervention not only prevents disability but also reduces cataract-related morbidity and mortality.

Understanding Cataract : A cataract is the clouding (opacification) of the eye’s natural lens, leading to progressive vision impairment.

Causes of cataract include: Congenital factors, Trauma, Drug-induced changes, Diabetes, Age-related degeneration (most common)

With rising life expectancy and an ageing population, the demand for cataract surgery in India continues to grow. Unfortunately, many patients seek medical care only at advanced stages, resulting in complicated or high-risk cataracts with limited visual prognosis.

Despite extensive outreach programs, Sankar Foundation encounters numerous such cases daily, underscoring the urgent need for early detection and timely surgical intervention to eliminate avoidable blindness caused by cataracts.



(Photo illustration: Advanced and complicated cataracts in neglected cases at diagnosis)

Barriers to Cataract Treatment

Despite cataract being a treatable condition, a large number of individuals suffering from cataract-related blindness remain undiagnosed or untreated due to socio-economic and accessibility challenges.

The eyes have one language everywhere – George Herbert

Key barriers include:

- ✦ Limited access to nearby medical facilities
- ✦ Financial constraints
- ✦ Transportation and lodging expenses
- ✦ Loss of daily wages during treatment
- ✦ Gender bias in healthcare access
- ✦ Lack of awareness about cataract treatment
- ✦ Fear of surgery
- ✦ Acceptance of poor vision as a normal part of ageing
- ✦ Good vision in one eye delaying treatment
- ✦ Lack of family support or caregivers

Outreach and Care Initiatives : To overcome these barriers, Sankar Foundation Eye Hospital conducts regular outreach programs and cataract screening camps in underserved communities, including rural and tribal areas.

These initiatives involve:

- ✦ Organizing community cataract screening camps
- ✦ Identifying patients requiring surgery
- ✦ Providing transportation to the tertiary care center
- ✦ Conducting comprehensive pre-operative investigations and specialist examinations
- ✦ Offering free or subsidized cataract surgery

During hospitalization, patients receive food, accommodation, medical care, and support from trained staff. Following successful cataract surgery and the Day-1 post-operative check-up, patients are safely transported back to their villages. This holistic approach reduces the burden on families and caregivers while ensuring timely, effective treatment for those most in need.

Dr. Samantha Alekhya
Consultant
General ophthalmology



Post-Operative Care and Follow-up

Continuity of care is a cornerstone of successful cataract treatment. To ensure long-term visual recovery, Sankar Foundation has established designated vision centers located closer to rural communities.

These centers provide:

- ✦ Post-operative follow-up care
- ✦ Monitoring of visual recovery
- ✦ Early detection and management of complications
- ✦ Referral to tertiary centres when necessary

This decentralized model of care ensures that patients receive timely support without the burden of traveling long distances, thereby improving outcomes and reducing the risk of untreated complications.

Conclusion : Cataract blindness is both preventable and treatable. By increasing awareness, expanding access to surgical services, and strengthening community outreach, we can significantly reduce the burden of cataract-related blindness in India.

Together, we can restore vision and transform lives. Let us join hands in the fight against preventable blindness and make a lasting difference in the lives of those affected by cataract.



Outreach free eye screening camp in progress – bringing vision care closer to the community.

RICE WARS: WHICH GRAIN FUELS BETTER LIVING?

◆ Food is Medicine



Rice is one of the most widely consumed staples across the globe, forming the backbone of countless meals every day. But when it comes to choosing between brown rice and white rice, the debate can get a little tricky. One hand, white rice is soft, quick to cook, and highly versatile, making it a favourite in many kitchens.

On the other hand, brown rice is considered the healthier cousin, packed with the fibre, vitamins, and minerals that support long-term health. The choice isn't just about taste, it affects your energy levels, digestion, weight management, and even heart and eye health. While both types of rice can be part of a balanced diet, understanding their nutritional profiles, benefits, and potential downsides can help you make informed decisions about which rice to eat daily.

Brown rice offers clear advantages over white rice for eye health because it retains essential nutrients like vitamin E, magnesium, and antioxidants that support retinal function and protect against oxidative stress, while white rice loses most of these during processing. Choosing brown rice regularly may help reduce risks linked to age-related eye conditions compared to diets high in refined grains.

FEATURE	BROWN RICE	WHITE RICE
Processing	Whole grain with bran, germ, and endosperm intact	Bran and germ removed, leaving mostly starchy endosperm
Vitamin E & Antioxidants	Present, help protect eye cells from oxidative damage	Largely absent
Magnesium & Zinc	Higher levels, important for retinal health and visual function	Much lower
Fibre	Rich in fibre, supports overall vascular health including eye blood vessels	Minimal fibres
Glycaemic Index	Lower, helps stabilize blood sugar which reduces retinopathy	Higher, spikes risk of diabetic blood sugar and increases risk for eye complications

Why This Matters for Eye Health

- ◆ **Oxidative Stress Protection:** Brown rice's antioxidants may help slow progression of cataracts and age-related macular degeneration.
- ◆ **Blood Sugar Control:** Lower glycaemic index reduces risk of diabetic eye disease, a major cause of vision loss.
- ◆ **Vascular Support:** Magnesium and fibre improve circulation, supporting tiny blood vessels in the retina.
- ◆ **Nutrient Density:** Whole grains like brown rice provide B vitamins and minerals that contribute to healthy nerve and eye function.

Risks and Trade-offs

- ◆ **Digestibility:** White rice is easier

to digest and may be preferred for people with sensitive stomachs.

- ◆ **Cooking Time:** Brown rice takes longer to cook and has a chewier texture, which some may find less appealing.
- ◆ **Nutrient Loss:** White rice is often fortified with iron and folic acid, but these additions don't replace the full spectrum of natural antioxidants lost in processing.

What is the difference between brown rice and white rice?

The difference between the two comes down to more than just colour. It's also about how they are processed. Brown rice is a whole grain, which means it contains all three components of the grain: the bran, endosperm, and germ. White rice has a high glycaemic index,

in the range of 73 ± 4 . Brown rice is categorized as a medium glycaemic index food, with a GI of 68 ± 4 .

Eating white rice is also linked to a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes, while eating brown rice is linked to a lower risk.

Bottom Line

For eye health and overall wellness, brown rice is the superior choice thanks to its antioxidant and nutrient profile. White rice remains a staple for many diets, but incorporating more brown rice can provide long-term protective benefits for vision.

(Written by K Bangar Raju, with inputs from Harvard Medical School)

The eyes are the harbingers of love, and the silent messengers of the heart.
- Thomas Randolph

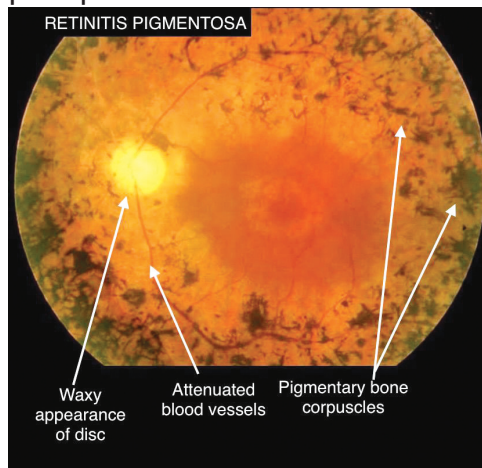
INHERITED SHADOWS: UNDERSTANDING RETINITIS PIGMENTOSA



Dr T Krishna
HOD,
Retina Dept

Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP) is a group of inherited retinal disorders that cause progressive vision loss, beginning with night blindness (nyctalopia) and peripheral field restriction, and often leading to severe visual impairment or legal blindness by mid-adulthood. While no definitive cure exists, advances in gene therapy, stem cell research, and retinal prosthetics are offering new hope for patients.

Both eyes are usually affected, and RP remains one of the most common inherited retinal disorders worldwide. Clinically, patients often experience progressive peripheral visual field loss, gradually developing tunnel vision, and in advanced stages, reduced central vision, defective colour discrimination, diminished visual acuity, and occasional photopia.



Overview

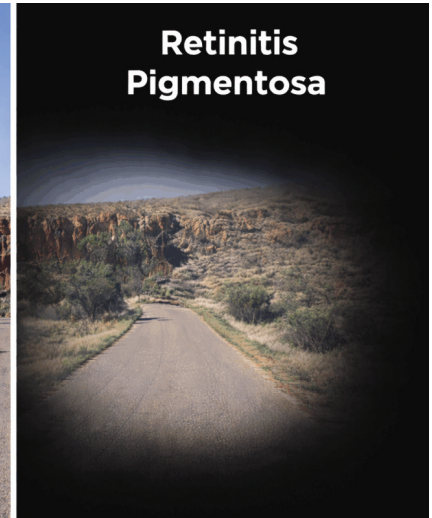
- ❖ **Definition:** RP is a genetically determined retinal dystrophy marked by degeneration of photoreceptors (rods first, then cones).
- ❖ **Prevalence:** Affects approximately 1 in 3,000–5,000 people worldwide, with over 1.5 million individuals living with RP.
- ❖ **Inheritance:** Can be autosomal dominant, autosomal recessive, or X-linked, involving more than 90 different genes.

Clinical Features

- ❖ **Early symptoms:** Night blindness (nyctalopia), difficulty adapting to dim light.

What we see depends mainly on what we look for – John Lubbock

- ❖ **Progression:** Gradual loss of peripheral vision ? tunnel vision ? eventual central vision decline.
- ❖ **Other signs:** Reduced colour vision, photopsia (flashes of light), and decreased visual acuity.
- ❖ **Fundus findings:** Bone spicule pigmentation, arteriolar attenuation, waxy optic disc pallor.



Pathophysiology

- ❖ **Genetic mutations:** Commonly involve RHO, USH2A, RPGR, PRPH2, PDE6A/B.
- ❖ **Mechanism:** Apoptosis of rod photoreceptors ? secondary cone degeneration.
- ❖ **Variants:** Sectoral RP, pericentral RP, RP sine pigmento, unilateral RP, and inverse RP (cone-rod pattern).

Investigations

- ❖ **Electroretinography (ERG):** Reduced scotopic responses, extinguished in advanced disease.
- ❖ **Visual field testing:** Ring scotomas, concentric constriction, tunnel vision.
- ❖ **Optical coherence tomography (OCT):** Ellipsoid zone loss, outer retinal thinning, cystoid macular edema (CME).
- ❖ **Fundus auto fluorescence (FAF):** Hyper auto fluorescent parafoveal ring.
- ❖ **Genetic testing:** Next-generation sequencing (NGS) for precise mutation identification.

Management

- ❖ **Supportive care:** Low vision aids, genetic counselling, visual rehabilitation.

- ❖ **CME treatment:** Oral acetazolamide (first-line), topical dorzolamide/brinzolamide, resistant cases may require steroids or anti-VEGF.
- ❖ **Cataract management:** Posterior sub-capsular cataracts treated with phacoemulsification + intraocular lens, with careful macular evaluation.
- ❖ **Recent advances:**
 - ❖ **Gene therapy** (e.g., RPE65 mutation-specific therapy).
 - ❖ **Stem cell therapy** for photoreceptor replacement.
 - ❖ **Retinal prosthesis** (e.g., ARGUS II implant).
 - ❖ **Optogenetics and mutation-specific drugs** under clinical trials.

Take-Home Message

Retinitis Pigmentosa is a progressive, inherited retinal disorder with significant impact on vision and quality of life. Early diagnosis, electrophysiological evaluation, and genetic testing are essential for timely management. Although current treatments are largely supportive, emerging therapies in genetics and regenerative medicine hold promise for slowing progression and restoring vision in the future.

CLEAR VISION DOESN'T ALWAYS MEAN HEALTHY EYES



Clinical Snapshot Metrics- April 2026

✦ Total Eye Surgeries	2,939
✦ Cataract Surgeries	2,098
✦ Retina Surgeries	103
✦ Retina Injections	179
✦ Glaucoma Surgeries	17
✦ Cornea Surgeries	560
✦ Paediatric Surgeries	03
✦ Orbit & Oculoplasty	116
✦ Total OP Screened	17,064

BRANCHES

✦ Srikakulam	
Eye Surgeries + Injections	408
✦ OP Screened	2,174
✦ Maddilapalem	
Eye Surgeries + Injections	92
✦ OP Screened	1,197
✦ Gajuwaka	
Eye Surgeries + Injections	41
✦ OP Screened	1,165
✦ Madhurawada	
Eye Surgeries	14
✦ OP Screened	631
✦ Total 58 Outreach free eye camps conducted and screened 3,937 patients and Performed 1,253 surgeries.	

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Many people believe that if they can read an eye chart clearly, their eyes must be perfectly healthy. But eye experts warn: **good vision does not always equal good eye health.** Serious eye conditions often develop silently, without obvious symptoms, until damage has already occurred.

In today's digital age - where smartphones, laptops, and tablets dominate our daily lives - **eye care has become a vital part of preventive healthcare, not just an optional step.**

The Hidden Dangers Behind Clear Vision

"Clear vision is something most people take for granted until it begins to change. Ironically, many eye problems develop silently, long before a person notices blurred vision or discomfort," explains Dr. Kavita Rao, Consultant Ophthalmologist & Eye Surgeon.

- ✦ 20/20 vision only measures clarity at a distance. It doesn't reveal hidden diseases.
- ✦ Glaucoma can damage the optic nerve while vision tests still appear normal.
- ✦ Dry eye disease, early cataracts, or corneal irregularities may first show up as glare, halos, or reduced contrast sensitivity—not obvious blur.

Digital Eye Strain: A Modern Epidemic

With remote work, online learning, and endless scrolling, Digital Eye Strain is on the rise.

Studies show that screen focus reduces blink rate by nearly 50%, causing tears to evaporate faster. This leads to:

- ✦ Burning or irritated eyes

- ✦ Blurred or fluctuating vision
- ✦ Headaches
- ✦ Difficulty focusing
- ✦ Dryness and redness

"Prolonged screen exposure destabilizes the tear film, leading to ocular surface inflammation and fluctuating vision," says an eye expert.

Why Regular Eye Check-ups Are Essential

Eye specialists emphasize that comprehensive eye exams go far beyond checking spectacle power.

A full check-up includes:

- ✦ Cornea and ocular surface examination
- ✦ Tear film and dryness assessment
- ✦ Intraocular pressure measurement (to detect glaucoma)
- ✦ Optic nerve evaluation
- ✦ Retina examination

Early detection saves sight. Many conditions can be treated before vision loss occurs—if caught in time.

Simple Steps to Protect Your Eyes

Experts recommend adopting everyday habits to safeguard vision:

- ✦ Follow the **20-20-20 rule**: every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds.
- ✦ Avoid indiscriminate use of preserved over-the-counter eye drops.
- ✦ Wear UV-protective sunglasses to reduce long-term damage.
- ✦ Ensure adequate sleep to repair the ocular surface and boost visual performance.

The Takeaway

Clear vision is not the same as healthy eyes. In a world where digital devices dominate, **eye health must be treated as preventive healthcare.** Regular check-ups, protective habits, and awareness can help ensure that your eyes remain healthy—not just sharp

(Insights by **K Bangar Raju**, Editor with inputs from Times Now)

The face is a picture of the mind with the eyes as its interpreter - Marcus Tullius Cicero