



Eye Priority, P.C.

Newsletter Archives

Why Is Myopia Increasing?

A recent headline in the Los Angeles Times read “Doctors Puzzled as Myopia Rates Soar.”

As Dr. de Simone notes: “It is not good when doctors are puzzled.”

According to the article, reprinted in the Arizona Republic on December 15, the National Eye Institute, part of the National Institutes of Health, published research showing a sizable increase in rates of myopia (nearsightedness). The study looked at adults in the U.S., comparing the numbers of nearsighted adults over the last thirty years.

Myopia rates in people ages 12 to 54 increased from 25 percent in the early 1970’s to 41.6 percent in the five-year period ending in 2004.

Scientists are unsure what has caused the increase, although some suspect that computer use or changes in recreational activities may be factors. Dr de Simone comments: “We notice that a concentration on near-range work such as using a computer has a negative impact on the ability to see well at distance. Children are experiencing difficulty in school as a result of this type of imbalance. We certainly see this in our practice. Sometimes we see myopia that is more pronounced when doing computer work. One seven-year old told me recently: ‘I can read fine on paper, but electronic things bug my eyes.’ ”

Dr. de Simone stresses the importance of early eye exams, which Eye Priority conducts on children as young as six months. “The best treatment for near-sightedness is to discover it early. We can prescribe glasses, vision therapy, Corneal Refractive Therapeutic contact lenses, and keep children from falling behind in school and developmentally.”

As a contribution to research efforts to discover possible patterns and correlations in rising myopia rates, Eye Priority is conducting a preliminary survey of our patients. If you would like to participate, we welcome your assistance and assure you that any information you provide will be kept in strictest confidence.

