Myopia
(Nearsightedness)

Nearsightedness (*myopia*) is when objects that are far away cannot be seen clearly. This usually happens because the eye is either longer than normal or bends (*refracts*) the light too much. As a result, the image is blurred.

Myopia also often develops in the pre-teen years and progresses through the teens. You may see them holding things close to their eyes to see. You may also notice children sitting close to the television or white board in school. It generally stabilizes by the end of the teenage years. Myopia that continues to develop is called *progressive myopia*.

CAUSES
- Growth spurts in children.
- Certain drugs and medicines.

Some other causes of myopia (*secondary myopia*) can happen from other medical conditions such as:
- Developing cataracts.
- High blood sugar (e.g. uncontrolled diabetes).
- Pregnancy.
- Premature birth.
- Other diseases of the eye.

SYMPTOMS
People with myopia have blurred vision in the affected eye(s) for anything far away, but can usually find a point up close at which they can see clearly.

DIAGNOSIS
An optometrist or ophthalmologist can diagnose myopia with tests using a series of lenses in front of the eye and the eye reading chart.

TREATMENT
- Glasses or contact lenses.
- Ophthalmologists can use painless laser treatments to change the shape of the clear covering at the front of the eye (*cornea*).

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:
You get a rapid blurring of vision in one or both eyes.

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