Vision Correction

Your exam shows you likely have a correctable vision problem. Your visual acuity is usually measured using an eye chart with 20/20 being the normal value. Your visual acuity today was:
_____ Right eye, _____ Left eye.

Many people can get normal vision with corrective glasses or contact lenses. The normal eye works like a camera. The human eye has a lens that focuses the light on the *retina* (a special area that covers the inside back of the eye). Nearsightedness (*myopia*) results when the eyeball is shaped longer than normal. This causes light to focus in front of the retina, blurring the image. This is an example of what is called a "refractive error".

Other causes of refractive error that can be corrected include hyperopia or farsightedness. This causes blurring of objects viewed up close. Astigmatism is blurred vision from an uneven curve of the cornea. **Presbyopia means loss of close vision with aging.** The ability of the eye to focus up close begins to weaken in the mid-forties. Corrective reading glasses may be purchased without a prescription. If you are nearsighted, bifocal lenses may be needed.

Other causes of vision problems include cataracts, retinal problems, glaucoma, and circulation problems. If any of these are suspected, you should be examined by an eye specialist (*ophthalmologist*). For refractive problems, new laser surgery techniques (LASIK and PRK) have proven very helpful. These procedures can correct vision so that glasses or contacts are not needed. See an ophthalmologist or optometrist as recommended to have a complete eye exam. They will determine if you have a correctable refractive error.

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