

New technology to help with vision problems

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For millions of people, everyday tasks such as reading, writing, watching television, writing checks, and seeing the faces of their grandchildren are not possible due to vision loss. Macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, cataracts, and stroke are the leading causes of vision loss today. According to the Lighthouse National Eye Survey, one of every four adults over the age of 65 has a vision impairment that inhibits their ability to read normal newsprint or recognize faces from across the room with conventional glasses or contact lenses. Fortunately, the advances in electronic technology now allow millions of people to enjoy their lives more fully. Electronic technology now allows even the legally blind to read, write, see the television, and enjoy sight

seeing while on vacation with the use of video magnification systems. Many companies throughout the world have taken a special interest to help the "baby boom generation". One of the most innovative companies in the field is an American company called Enhanced Vision that has developed the widest selection of video magnifiers. According to Dr. Brett Nagatani, a low vision specialist in Los Angeles, California, "The new generation of video magnifiers is tremendous. With these devices, we can even help those patients who could not be helped with surgery, medications, and conventional low vision magnifiers."

Some of these video magnification systems consist of a pair of glasses with small liquid crystal displays, which allow us to watch

television, see plays, and enjoy sightseeing. Other systems include desktop video magnifiers such as the Merlin, which displays print in a magnified, high contrast view for easy reading; the reader must simply place their reading materials on a tray. Finally, one of the more innovative systems are the portable video magnifiers such as the Amigo (pictured above) that can help us all to read menus, sign checks, and read labels at the grocery store. At last, the latest advancements in technology give us all the ability to use our remaining vision.

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