



Vision

To See or Not to See

This station will allow you to experience changes in vision prevalent in later life. The simulation provides insight into four vision disorders: Cataracts, Glaucoma, Diabetic Retinopathy, and Age-Related Macular Degeneration. Each of these disorders makes it difficult for an older adult to see, creating potentially dangerous situations and disengagement with familiar daily activities such as reading or watching TV (1).

Materials

- A pair of glasses (prescription glasses, lab goggles, sunglasses, swimming goggles, blue light glasses)
- 3-4 plastic freezer bags (Ziploc bags)
- Scissors
- Tape (clear tape works best)
- A black marker or Sharpie

Procedure

1. Trim edges of all freezer bags to make each one sheet of plastic.
2. Place the plastic over the top of your lenses and trace the shape with the marker.
3. Cut out the plastic bag shape and use it as a stencil to create seven more (total of 8).
4. Set two cut-outs aside for the cataract simulation (cloudy vision).
5. Use the black marker to draw on the plastic a centimetre wide edge around the perimeter of two lenses for the glaucoma simulation.
6. Use the black marker to draw different shape spots two plastic lenses for the diabetic retinopathy simulation.
7. Use the black marker to draw a medium size black circle in the middle of the last two plastic lenses cut-outs for the age-related macular degeneration simulation.
8. Use tape to attach one set of plastic cut-outs to the frames Use a small piece of tape that will not interfere with the field of vision. Transparent tape works best.
9. Test ALL four vision disorders. Try to read or use your phone. Notice how different you feel.
10. Pick ONE age-related vision disorder to use for the remainder of your simulation journey.

Reflection Questions

1. How did you adapt your functional ability with impaired vision?
2. Which vision disorder was the easiest to function with, and which condition was the most difficult?
3. After completing all simulations, reflect on how impaired vision combined with chronic conditions (i.e., hearing, arthritis, dementia) to make daily tasks difficult to complete?