

Ability To See At Ground Level Not Something To Lose Sight Of

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(NAPSA)—In today's fashion-focused world, looks can be deceiving. This is especially the case with some eyeglass lenses designed to treat an inevitable, age-related eye condition known as presbyopia, which makes it difficult to see objects close up. Although all lenses in this category may seem the same, they don't all allow you to see things the same way, especially when it comes to looking down.



Dr. Selenow

For people who want to avoid the tell-tale aging signs of bifocals and reading glasses, progressive lenses, also known as no-line bifocals, are a popular choice because they offer a seamless, single-vision look and the ability to see at near, far and in-between distances. However, some traditional progressive lenses can lead to visual discomfort and may even make some everyday actions more challenging.

And the problem isn't just endemic to progressive lenses. In fact, a recent survey conducted by Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc. revealed that 35 percent of people who were surveyed and wear either bifocals, trifocals, reading glasses or progressive lenses experience blurred vision and 30 percent feel uncertain about their next steps when per-

forming tasks that require a view of the ground, such as walking up and down stairs, stepping off a curb or navigating uneven terrain.

These statistics are significant when considering that recent studies have linked the inability to see clearly with an increased risk of slips and falls. In fact, some research has found that impaired vision is correlated with an increased incidence of falling, even when there is a relatively small reduction in visual acuity.

In the case of lenses designed for presbyopia, both segmented multifocal lenses and progressive lenses presume that downward gaze is for reading and other close work, and therefore, the correction provided at the bottom of these lenses is not always well-suited for viewing ground-level objects. If you have presbyopia, consider the following:

1. Use care and take your time. When approaching stairs or other changes in your walking path, make sure you are comfortable with your view before proceeding.

2. Be sure to visit your eye care professional once a year. Vision changes regularly and your ability to see clearly when looking down may be related to your prescription.

3. Choose your lenses before your frames. If you're trying to stay within a budget, it's more important to spend your money on the quality of the lens rather than on the look of the frames.

4. Be cautious of super-small, high-fashion frames. Although they may be stylish, your vision will be much better with a frame that is large enough to provide a clear ground view.

5. Ask for a lens that provides a wide field of view. The width of the viewing zone can affect depth perception and, as a result, impact the way you see things when looking down.

6. Consider a progressive lens with an expanded viewing zone. Currently, this is available in DEFINITY™ Lenses from Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc. These lenses offer a breakthrough technology that combines a wide field of view and unique FOURTH ZONE™ for a GROUND VIEW ADVANTAGE™.

Remember, presbyopia is an inevitable condition that affects people over 40. If you have presbyopia, it's important to make sure that your lenses offer both the form and function necessary to maximize your field of view. Without both in place, you may be missing out on what's right at your feet.

• *Dr. Arkady Selenow, O.D., F.A.A.O. is an internationally accomplished lecturer and author, and a teacher at the State University of New York College of Optometry. In addition to co-directing Manhattan Vision Associates and Queens Eye Associates, he is one of the founding faculty of the Institute for Vision Research.*