

True or False - Reading glasses will make my blurred vision worse.

False. If your vision is starting to blur when you read, then reading glasses can be an effective and inexpensive way to treat a normal vision problem that occurs as we get older.

According to Aging Eye Times, this myth came about because people get used to living in a blurry world and then begin using glasses for a period of time. When they stop using the glasses and realize the stark difference between their vision with and without the glasses, they assume their vision is worse because of the glasses.

The fact is that for many over 40, particularly men, the lens of the eye begins to harden and loses the ability to focus on fine print as it once did. At first we move the print farther away to compensate and eventually run out of arm. At this point some people will still refuse to get reading glasses because they feel using them will speed the deterioration of their eyes. But the truth is that reading glasses will help you to see fine print now that your eyesight has already worsened.

If you are contemplating using reading glasses, try using a pair with low magnification to begin with. Usually a 1 or 1.5 will suffice for a few years and then you may need to change to a higher magnification as time goes by.

The best place to start when you are having problems with your vision is with a visit to an eye professional to ascertain what the problem is and what you can do to remedy it.

Warm up your winter with this healthy Caribbean stew! Caribbean Chicken Stew

This recipe is from the book *Cocinado para Latinos con Diabetes (Diabetic Cooking for Latinos)* by Olga V. Fuste, published by the American Diabetes Association



Serves: 8 Serving size: 1 cup plus 1 piece chicken

Ingredients:

2 tbsp	olive oil	1/8 tsp	anchiote powder
2-3	garlic cloves, minced	2 tbsp	sofrito*
1/4 tsp	oregano	1/2 cup	tomato sauce
1/4 tsp	salt	2 cups	low-fat, low-sodium chicken broth
Dash	paprika	2 cups	water
Dash	pepper	1 cup	uncooked long-grain rice
1	3-lb chicken, cut in 8 pieces, skin and fat removed	1 cup	frozen peas
		2 tbsp	pimiento (optional)

Directions:

1. Combine olive oil, garlic, oregano, paprika, salt and pepper in large container. Add chicken and marinate in the refrigerator for at least an hour.
2. Heat canola oil in large stockpot. Add achiote and stir until oil turns bright orange. Add sofrito and saute for 2-3 minutes. Add chicken and saute 5-6 minutes. Add tomato sauce, reduce heat, cover and cook for 10-15 minutes. Stir several times.
3. Add chicken broth and water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, add rice, cover and cook 15 minutes. Add peas, cover and cook for 5 more minutes. Garnish with pimiento, if using.

* Sofrito is the base for many Caribbean dishes. It can be purchased or made. In essence, sofrito is the same as a mild pico de gallo (onions, garlic, tomatoes, cilantro, green bell pepper).

Do you need more information?

Do you need claim forms? Do you need information about what your plan covers? You can find this information along with various claim forms on our website at www.ctsi.org. Look under the **CHP** section and then click on the **CHP documents** link and find the information and forms you need. For claim information, please call Anthem at 866-698-0087



Health Awareness

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In February, the Eyes Have It!



February is Workplace Eye Safety Month.

An eyepatch looks great on a pirate but it does not look very good on a county employee. February is Workplace Eye Safety Month and we are dedicating the bulk of our newsletter to eye safety issues.

According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Eye M.D.s, the workplace is a leading cause of ocular trauma, visual loss, disability and blindness. Each working day in the United States, more than 2,000 employees sustain job-related eye injuries. 90% of these injuries can be prevented with proper protective eyewear.

Many of those injured on the job did not think they needed to wear eye protection or were wearing inappropriate eyewear for the job. The truth is that safety eyewear should be worn *whenever* there is a chance that machines or activities present a hazard of flying objects, chemical splashes, harmful radiation or a combination of these or other hazards. You may always consult

with a CTSI safety representative if you are in doubt as to what type of eyewear is needed for your position or if you are concerned there might be a danger to your eyes.

Does this page look blurry?

Another eye danger to be aware of is macular degeneration. Macular degeneration is the leading cause of legal blindness, affecting more Americans than cataracts and glaucoma combined. In macular degeneration, the light-sensing cells of the macula, which has our sharpest vision, malfunction and may over time cease to work. Macular degeneration occurs most often in people over 60 years old and although rare, may affect children or teenagers.

Macular degeneration affects the retina, which controls our ability to read, drive a car, recognize faces or colors and see objects in fine detail. Maintaining regular eye examinations is the best way to detect it. The eye care professional can use visual acuity tests, field screenings, and dilated fundus examinations to look for macular degeneration.



True or False

Reading glasses make my eye problems worse. (See back for answer)



Do you know your new vision benefits?

For those of you with vision benefits through CHP, some plan enhancements have been made for 2006. Our previous benefits allowed only an annual eye exam and all materials (eyeglass lenses, contact lenses and frames) every two years. Beginning in 2006, along with the annual eye exam, eyeglass lenses and contact lenses are now available on an annual basis. Frames will remain a 2 year benefit. This increased benefit comes without a change in your monthly contribution or co-pays.

In addition, you have access through VSP for discounts on additional lenses and upgrades in materials above and beyond your standard benefit. Through VSP you also have access to discounts for laser vision correction.

For more information on these exciting changes, please contact VSP at 800-877-7195 or visit their website at www.vsp.com.