**News Release**

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**Nearsightedness is a Public Health Crisis**

[INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME] *and the American Academy of Ophthalmology educate public on increasing incidence of myopia among children*

<INSERT CITY, STATE>– [INSERT DATE] — Nearsightedness has risen dramatically over the last 50 years. If nothing is done to help slow the increase, half the world’s population may be nearsighted by the year 2050. That means much more than a lot of people in glasses. It means a lot of kids today are at risk of developing vision-threatening eye conditions tomorrow. That’s why [INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME] and the American Academy of Ophthalmology are sharing information about myopia and its progression.

People who have myopia, also known as nearsightedness, can see close-up objects clearly, but objects farther away are blurry. Myopia that begins in early childhood often worsens as the child grows. If these changes are too extreme, it can be hard to correct the blurriness with glasses or contact lenses and the risk of potentially blinding eye conditions rises, including [retinal detachment](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/detached-torn-retina), [glaucoma](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/what-is-glaucoma), early [cataracts](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/what-are-cataracts) and [myopic maculopathy](https://eyewiki.org/Myopic_Traction_Maculopathy), a leading cause of blindness world-wide.

The socioeconomic impact is also devastating. Studies estimate that the global impact of uncorrected myopia results in a $244 billion annual productivity loss, while blindness from myopic macular degeneration results in a $6 billion annual productivity loss.

[INSERT YOUR SPOKESPERSON’S QUOTE HERE]

While more research is required to understand why myopia is on the rise, new [treatment options are available](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/misight-orthok-atropine-myopia-nearsighted-child) to slow the disease in children so the most devastating consequences of high myopia can be avoided. Check out these resources, including a [downloadable poster, infographics and videos](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/myopia-print-download-videos-infographics-poster), for more information about myopia and preventing its progression.

For more information on eye health, visit [www.eyesmart.org](http://www.eyesmart.org/)

**About the American Academy of Ophthalmology**

The American Academy of Ophthalmology is the world’s largest association of eye physicians and surgeons. A global community of 32,000 medical doctors, we protect sight and empower lives by setting the standards for ophthalmic education and advocating for our patients and the public. We innovate to advance our profession and to ensure the delivery of the highest-quality eye care. Our EyeSmart® program provides the public with the most trusted information about eye health. For more information, visit [aao.org](http://www.aao.org/).

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