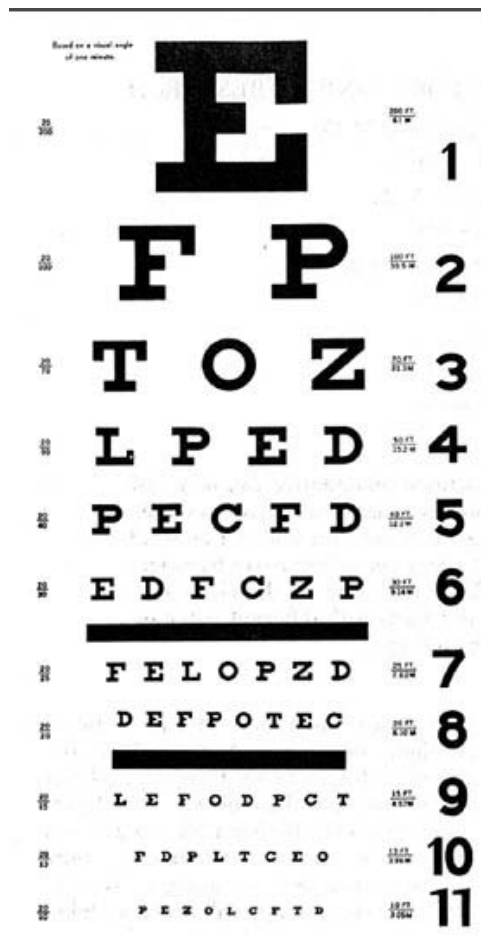


People Suffering from Short Sightedness Will Multiply

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. short-sighted /ˌʃɔːrtˈsaɪ.tɪd/ (adjective) can only clearly see objects that are close to them
Example: The doctor will conduct several tests for the short-sighted patient.
2. sevenfold /ˈsev.ən.fəʊld/ (adjective) seven times as big or as much
Example: By 1992, this figure had risen to 660,000—nearly a sevenfold increase.
3. faraway /ˌfɑːr.ə.weɪ/ (adjective) a long way away
Example: They traveled to faraway lands in search of the treasure.
4. pinpoint /ˈpɪn.pɔɪnt/ (verb) to find out or say the exact position in space or time of something
Example: It is not possible to pinpoint precisely the time of death.
5. onset /ˈɒn.set/ (noun) the moment at which something unpleasant begins
Example: The new treatment can delay the onset of the disease by several years.



Researchers predicted in a new report published in the journal Ophthalmology that by 2050, half of the world's population will be **short-sighted**. The medical term for this condition is myopia. It is also known as near-sightedness. It is when we have difficulty focusing on objects that are far away from us.

The researchers say that around 4.8 billion people will suffer from myopia. This is a **seven-fold** increase in cases from 2000 to 2050. Sixty years ago, around 15 percent of the Chinese population was short-sighted. Now, almost 90 percent of Chinese teenagers and young adults have trouble seeing **faraway** objects. A recent survey found that up to 95 percent of teenagers in South Korea are near-sighted.

The researchers said they could not **pinpoint** definite reasons for this phenomenon and say it could be a combination of factors. They did say that looking at computer screens and mobile phones could be a leading cause. Researchers said the sudden rise in myopia may be linked to "lifestyle changes resulting from a combination of decreased time outdoors and increased near-work activities".

Science journalist Sarah Zhang said, "spending time outdoors, especially in early childhood, reduces the **onset** of myopia". Professor Kovin Naidoo, a co-author of the report, offered some advice. He said: "You could spend a long time reading computers and screens, but also spend two hours outdoors."

DISCUSSION

1. How good is your eyesight?
2. Do you think scientists will be able to cure myopia?
3. How can we take better care of our eyes?
4. Why do you think more and more people have failing eyesight?
5. Should children be made to spend more time outdoors?