

# Glossary for the teacher

**Amblyopia**

Reduced vision in an eye that appears to be normal. This is due to insufficient stimulation of the eye during visual development (from about 0-7 years). It is usually called the 'lazy eye'.

**Aphakia**

Absence of the lens in the pupil.

**Astigmatism**

An irregular curvature of the cornea, resulting in the condition in which a point of light cannot be brought to focus.

**Bitot's spot**

A whitish foamy material which appears on the conjunctiva. This is a sign of vitamin A deficiency.

**Blind spot**

A gap in the visual field occurring when an image is focused on the space occupied by the optic disc.

**Cataract**

Opacity of the lens.

**Diplopia**

Double vision.

**Enucleation**

Removal of the eye.

**Glaucoma**

A disease of the optic nerve caused by ocular pressure that is too high for the eye to support.

**Hypermetropia**

Long sightedness.

**Keratitis**

Inflammation of the cornea.

**LASER**

Acronym for Light Amplification by Stimulation Emission of Radiation.

**Leukoma**

Opacity of the cornea.

**Madarosis**

Loss of eyebrow and eyelashes. This is a common complication of leprosy.

**Miosis**

Constriction of the pupil.

**Mydriasis**

Dilation of the pupil.

**Myopia**

Short sightedness.

**Onchocerciasis** (River Blindness)

An infestation of the human body by a filarial parasite known as *onchocerca volvulus*. This thread-like worm, microfilaria, is transmitted into the human body through the bite of a species of fly called the Black fly (*simulium damnosum*). These flies breed around rapidly-flowing streams in many tropical countries of Africa, the Americas and Yemen.

**Ophthalmia neonatorum**

A sticky eye which occurs in babies during the first 28 days of life. It can lead to blindness unless treated quickly.

**Optometrist**

A person trained to perform eyesight tests and examinations and to prescribe corrective lenses or spectacles to those who need them.

**Ophthalmologist**

A physician specialised in the management of all eye conditions.

**Photophobia**

Dislike of light.

**Presbyopia**

When a person is unable to focus on near objects because of insufficient accommodation ability. This occurs with ageing.

**Ptosis**

Drooping of the upper eyelid.

**Strabismus**

Squint, the upset in the balance of the co-ordination of the six pairs of the extra ocular muscles.

**Stye**

Inflammation of the glands in the eyelid.

**Trachoma**

An infectious disease of the eye caused by *chlamydia trachomatis*. The infection causes redness and discharge and swelling of the inner lining of the eyelids. After repeated infection, the inflammation causes scarring of the inner lining of the eyelid. Over time this causes the eyelashes to turn in (trichiasis). The inturned eyelashes rub on the cornea causing loss of vision and blindness.

**Tonometer**

An instrument for measuring the intra ocular pressure.

**Xerophthalmia**

Dryness of the conjunctival epithelium due to vitamin A deficiency. It is a major cause of preventable blindness in children.