

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **July Declared as Dry Eye Awareness Month by Prevent Blindness to Increase Awareness and Education on Condition that Affects Vision, Mental Health**

***- Prevent Blindness Offers Fact Sheets, Graphics, Video and Web Resource to Educate Public on Dry Eye Symptoms, Treatment Options, and More -***

**CHICAGO (June 28, 2022)** – “Dry eye disease (DED)” is a condition that occurs when tears do not provide adequate lubrication for the eyes. The discomfort that results from dry eyes may affect vision. And, according to the [National Eye Institute \(NEI\)](#), if severe dry eye goes untreated, it can sometimes damage the cornea, the clear outer layer at the front of the eye.

[Prevent Blindness](#), the nation’s leading non-profit eye health organization, has declared July as “Dry Eye Awareness Month” to provide free resources to providers and the public on dry eye, including [fact sheets](#) and shareable [social media graphics](#) available in English and Spanish, and a [dedicated web page](#). Additionally, as part of the Focus on Eye Health Expert Series, Stephanie Marioneaux, MD, cornea and external disease specialist, and Prevent Blindness board of directors member, provides detailed information in the recent “[Dry Eye](#)” episode.

[OCuSOFT® Inc.](#), a privately-held eye and skin care company dedicated to innovation in eyelid hygiene and ocular health, is once again partnering with Prevent Blindness in support of Dry Eye Awareness Month.

Mental health may also be affected by dry eye. A [recent study published in JAMA Ophthalmology](#) found that depression was associated with more severe dry eye symptoms and overall signs, suggesting that among patients with moderate to severe DED, those with depression may be likely to have more severe DED. According to the study conclusion, the findings support consideration of depression as a comorbidity when managing patients with DED.

Symptoms of dry eye include:

- Burning or stinging
- Particles in the eye
- Gritty, sandy feeling
- Itchiness
- Redness and inflammation

- Stringy mucus
- Extreme sensitivity, especially to cigarette smoke
- Transient blurry vision
- Increased sensitivity to light

Having these symptoms may mean that you have dry eye, but they may also be caused by other conditions. A thorough evaluation by an eye doctor is needed to determine the exact cause of these vision symptoms.

“Dry eye can have lasting, damaging effects if left untreated,” said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “An exam by an eyecare professional can equip patients with a treatment plan that protects vision and improves mental health.”

For more information on dry eye, please visit the Prevent Blindness resource page at [preventblindness.org/understanding-dry-eye](https://preventblindness.org/understanding-dry-eye).

### **About Prevent Blindness**

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, visit us at [preventblindness.org](https://preventblindness.org), and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

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