

MYOPIA MANAGEMENT

Myopia, also known as nearsightedness, causes distant objects to appear blurry while close objects remain clear. This condition occurs when the eye is unable to properly focus light on the retina, often due to an elongated eyeball or a highly curved cornea.

Myopia is becoming more widespread in the United States, especially among children. Estimates indicate that approximately 36.1% of the US population, which is around 19.5 million children, are currently affected by myopia. The prevalence of myopia is higher in urban areas at 41% compared to 15.7% in rural areas. Globally, myopia is also increasing, and



Estimates indicated that approximately

36.1%

of the U.S. population, around 19.5 million children are currently affected by myopia.

projections suggest that almost 50% of the world's population will have myopia by 2050.

Myopia management by eyecare professionals aims to slow down the progression of nearsightedness in children and young adults, especially during the developmental years. Optometrists provide interventions such as specialized contact lenses (such as ortho-k and daily disposable dual-focal lenses), myopia management glasses (specialized spectacle lenses designed to slow down the progression of nearsightedness, particularly in children. They are not

available in the US), and low-dose atropine eye drops. These interventions aim to prevent or reduce the adverse effects of *high myopia*, which can increase the risk of developing other eye conditions such as glaucoma, cataracts, myopic macular degeneration, and retinal detachment.

Training

Many optometry schools now incorporate myopia management into their curriculum, providing students with the necessary tools and knowledge to manage myopia.

Practicing optometrists can pursue continuing education opportunities in myopia management, such as workshops, conferences, and online courses, to stay updated with the latest advancements. They can also utilize online resources and journals to further their knowledge. Seeking guidance from experienced optometrists successful in myopia management can offer valuable insights and support. Building relationships with ophthalmologists and other pediatric healthcare providers can facilitate effective co-management of myopic patients.



Resources

- **American Optometric Association (AOA)**
<https://www.aoa.org/>

AOA is deeply involved in myopia management and serves as a leading advocate for quality eye care. They offer resources such as the Myopia Management Guidelines and the Children's Vision Toolkit to support Doctors of Optometry.

- **World Council of Optometry (WCO)**
<https://worldcouncilofoptometry.info/>

WCO supports global efforts to raise awareness and promote public health initiatives related to myopia, particularly in children. They host the [Global Myopia Awareness Coalition \(GMAC\)](#), a collaborative effort to address the growing issue of myopia worldwide.

- **American Academy of Optometry (AAO)**
<https://aaopt.org/>

AAO promotes excellence in optometry and provides educational resources and special interest groups, including one focused on myopia management.



Why choose this path?

I chose this path because it is incredibly rewarding. I truly believe I can make a meaningful difference in my patients' lives—myopia management allows me to reduce the risk of vision-threatening complications associated with high myopia later in life, which is both impactful and fulfilling. Additionally, treatments like Ortho-K and daily disposable dual-focal lenses improve my patients' quality of life and enhance their self-esteem.

On a personal note, I love working with children. They are full of energy, curiosity, and potential. I see them as our future doctors, engineers, lawyers, and leaders—the future of our generation. Being able to support their vision and overall well-being from a young age is a privilege and one of the most meaningful aspects of my work.

Glenda Aleman-Moheeputh, OD

Board Member, Latinos en Optometry
MIAMI, FL