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High-Tech Glasses Help Those With Tunnel Vision

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THURSDAY, Sept. 7 (HealthDay News) -- A visual aid invented by U.S. scientists may help improve vision and mobility for people with tunnel vision.

The study found that the device -- which combines a tiny camera, a pocket-sized computer and transparent computer display mounted on a pair of glasses -- significantly increased the effectiveness and speed with which visually impaired people were able to find objects.

About one in 200 Americans over age 55 has tunnel vision, which is caused by diseases such as retinitis pigmentosa and glaucoma. People with tunnel vision lose their peripheral (side) vision and are left with only a small window of central vision that can be like looking through a tube.

It can be difficult for people with tunnel vision to make their way through streets and buildings, and they often bump into or trip over obstacles. As one researcher explained, for people with tunnel vision, trying to locate a misplaced item is like using a flashlight to search for a key in a dark room.

As reported in the September issue of *Investigative Ophthalmology & Visual Science*, the new glasses-mounted display provides users with added, detailed visual information. This can help them overcome difficulties caused by tunnel vision.

"We are very pleased with the results of this first evaluation and hope that with further study and refinement, we may soon make this device available for the public," inventor Dr. Eli Peli, a low-vision specialist and senior scientist at the Schepens Eye Research Institute, said in a prepared statement.

Peli is also a professor of ophthalmology at Harvard Medical School and the senior author of the study.

More information

The U.S. National Eye Institute has more about [eye diseases](#).

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