

Common Causes of Combined Vision and Hearing Loss

- Age Related Hearing and Vision Loss
- Usher Syndrome
- CHARGE Syndrome
- Premature birth
- Norrie Disease
- Congenital Rubella Syndrome
- Resources



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Age Related Hearing and Vision Loss

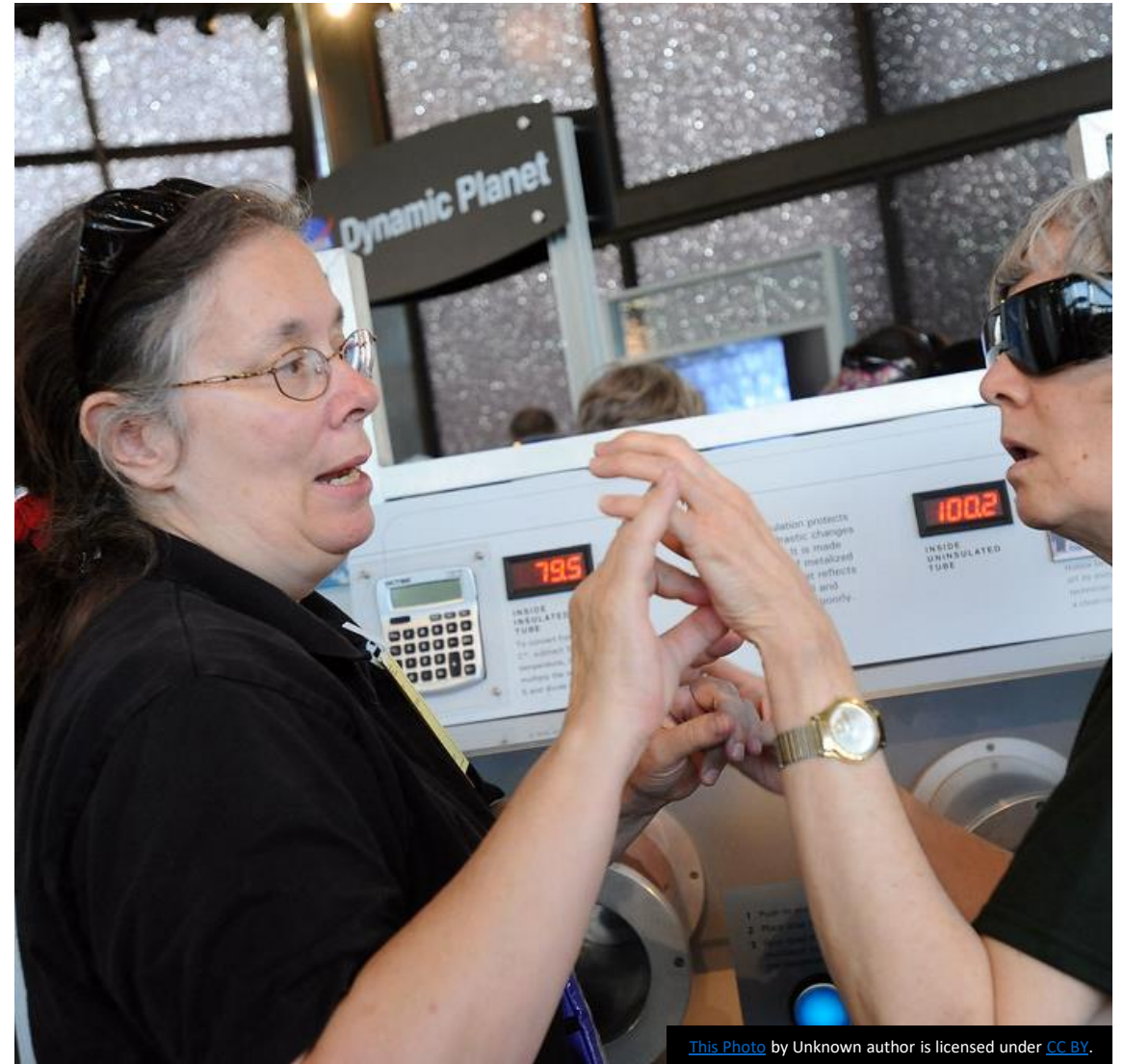
- People age 55 and over with combined vision and hearing loss comprise the largest group of people who are considered both deaf and blind in the United States.
- Hearing Loss can be caused by:
 - **Age**
 - **Past employment (machinery, environmental noise)**
 - **Military service**
 - **medications**
- The most common causes of vision loss in older adults are:
 - **Cataracts**
 - **Glaucoma**
 - **Age-related macular degeneration**
 - **Diabetes/diabetic retinopathy**
- For people who have been hearing and sighted their entire lives, the impact of this dual loss can be profound, mentally and emotionally.



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Usher Syndrome

- The most common genetic cause of deaf-blindness is Usher syndrome. Individuals with Usher experience hearing loss and have a progressive visual condition called retinitis pigmentosa (RP), which may first manifest itself as difficulty seeing at night or in poorly lit environments. Along with night blindness, RP also causes a loss of peripheral vision. There are three types of Usher syndrome, which manifest different levels of hearing loss.



CHARGE Syndrome

- CHARGE syndrome is a major genetic cause of deafness, visual impairment and many other physical and health related issues.
- For more information, visit [The Charge Syndrome Foundation](#).



Premature Births

- More and more babies who are born prematurely are surviving. Some present with conditions that affect hearing and vision, including [retinopathy of prematurity](#), a potentially blinding eye disorder.
- **Hearing loss** is one of the most common **birth** defects for **premature babies**. According to the American Speech-Language **Hearing** Association (ASHA), one to three per 1,000 children are born with **hearing loss**



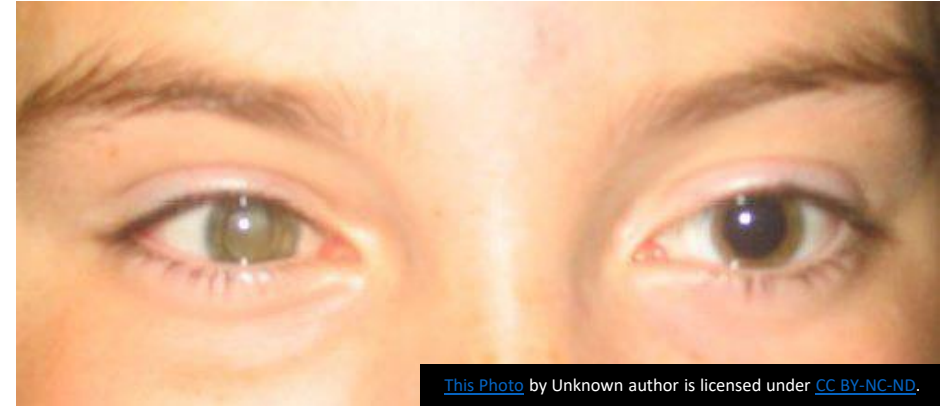
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Norrie Disease

- Norrie disease is a rare X-linked genetic disorder which causes males to be totally blind at birth or become blind in both eyes at a young age. Most males with Norrie disease also experience a hearing loss. Norrie disease runs in families because it is passed down through one of the chromosomes that determines gender (X-chromosome).
- For more information, visit the [Norrie Disease Association](#).





Congenital Rubella Syndrome

- Although eliminated in babies in the U.S., there is still a significant population of adults who are deaf and deaf-blind due to congenital rubella syndrome.

Resource:

Indiana Deaf-Blind Services Project

- The Indiana Deafblind Services Project is a statewide service authorized under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEIA). It is administered by the Blumberg Center for Interdisciplinary Studies in Special Education at Indiana State University. The Project's goal is to improve the quality of educational services available to Indiana's infants, toddlers, children, and youth with deafblindness.
- <https://indstate.edu/education/blumberg>



Resource: iCANCONNECT

- iCanConnect provides people with both significant vision and hearing loss with free equipment and training. iCanConnect is a national program with local contacts that helps people stay connected with friends, family and the world.
- In Indiana, Perkins School for the Blind is responsible for iCanConnect, and works with Easter Seals Crossroads and others to provide in-state service.
- Contact: Belva Smith:
bsmith@eastersealscrossroads.org
- <http://www.icanconnect.org/>

Resource: Blind and Visually Impaired Services

- **BVIS** provides services to eligible Hoosiers that are blind or visually impaired. For information regarding Blind and Visually Impaired Services contact staff at: **BVIS@fssa.in.gov** or at 877-241-8144.

Resource: Vocational Rehabilitation

- Vocational Rehabilitation helps eligible individuals with disabilities to achieve their employment goals.
- VR can also provide help with the following:
- Exploring your employment interests and skills
- Helping you to find your first job
- Providing assistive technology or other services to help you keep your job
- Re-entering employment in the same or different type of employment
- Providing services necessary for career advancement

Resource:

Helen Keller National Center

- Resources for common causes of vision and hearing loss
- <https://www.helenkeller.org/hknc/common-causes-0>

Contact US:

email: DHHShelp@fssa.in.gov

Website: Dhhs.in.gov

Videophone: 317-542-3324

