

Aging eyes? Staring at bright red light could rescue your vision

A few minutes of looking into a deep red light could have a dramatic effect on preventing eyesight decline as we age, according to a new study [published](#) [June 29] in The Journals of Gerontology.

If the results are replicated in future studies, and approved by the US Food and Drug Administration, the light could augur a new era in which millions of people have access to the easy home-based therapy. It would give them a new layer of protection against the natural aging processes that steal our eyes' sensitivity to light and ability to distinguish colors.

"You don't need to use it for very long to start getting a strong result," said lead author Glen Jeffery... The science works, Jeffery said, because the light stimulates the health of mitochondria, which are like batteries in our cells.

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The lights work on both cones and rods in the eye. Cones are photo receptor cells that detect color and work best in well-lit situations. Rods, which are much more plentiful, are retina cells that specialize in helping us see in dim light, [according to](#) the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

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Red lights can improve function in a range of diseases, particularly in the mitochondria in those undergoing aging with conditions such as Parkinson's, he noted.

"Every disease could have a mitochondrial angle," Jeffery said. "In diabetes, for instance, your mitochondria are very upset."

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