

Device May Help Blind People See

Inventors in Belgium have created a **device**¹ that might enable thousands of blind people to see. The invention includes a small video camera mounted on eyeglasses.

Blindness can occur for many different reasons. One reason is damage to the **retina**, the membrane that lines the inner eyeball. The retina picks up visual messages in the form of light. Then it sends those messages to the brain through the **optic nerve**. If a person's retina is not working, messages are not sent to the brain.

The Belgian scientists created a tiny electronic device that takes over for a damaged retina. They **implant**² the device inside the blind person's head, just behind the eye. The patient wears a pair of glasses with a little video camera mounted on them. The camera takes pictures and sends the images to the implant in the head. Then the implant electronically **stimulates**³ the optic nerve, sending the visual images to the brain. The scientists have tested the device in two patients. The results have been promising.

¹ **device:** a piece of equipment to serve a special purpose

² **implant:** to insert in living tissue

³ **stimulates:** makes active or more active

