

Eye health knowledge and information preferences of people at risk for glaucoma: Results of nationwide focus groups



Today's presenters



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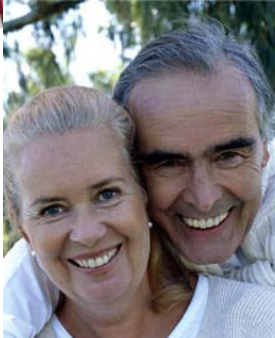


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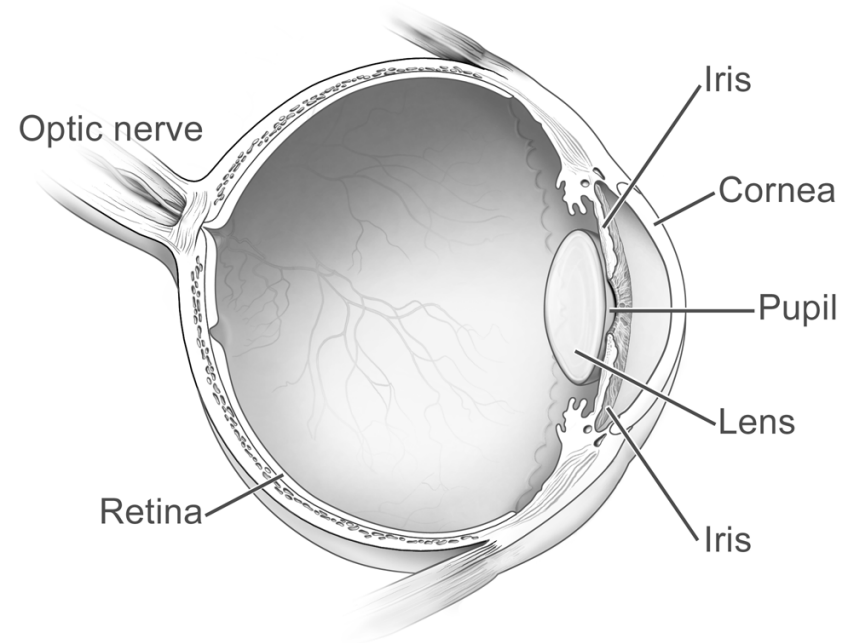
Glaucoma today



- Leading cause of vision loss and blindness.
- More than 2 million people affected.
- Half do not know they the disease.
- People at higher risk:
 - African Americans over age 40
 - Everyone over age 60, especially Mexican Americans
 - People with a family history

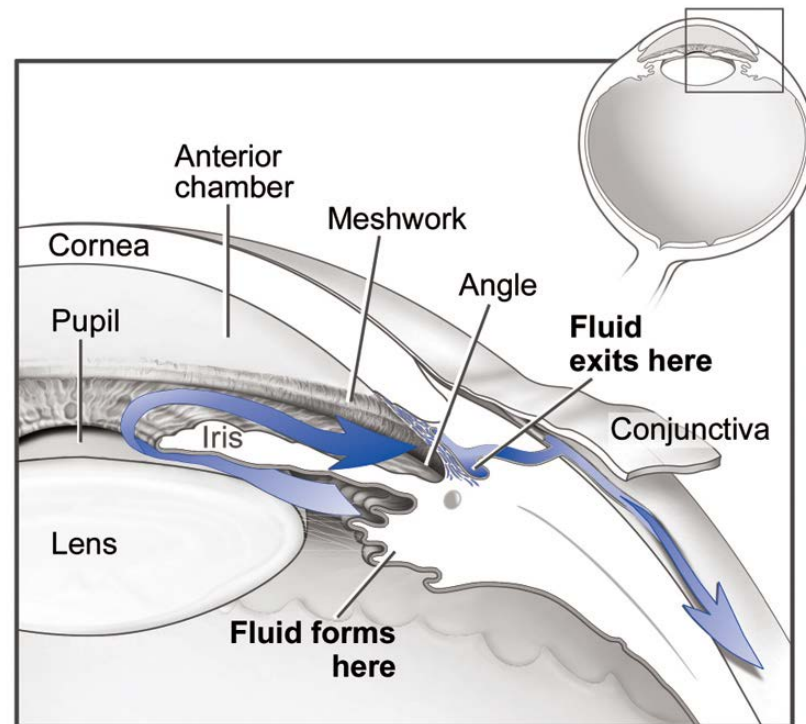
What is glaucoma?

- Classified as a group of diseases.
- Damages the optic nerve.
- Can cause permanent vision loss if left untreated.



What causes glaucoma?

- Slow fluid drainage.
- Pressure builds up and damages the optic nerve.
- Optic nerve damage can occur at different pressure levels for different people.



Preventing vision loss

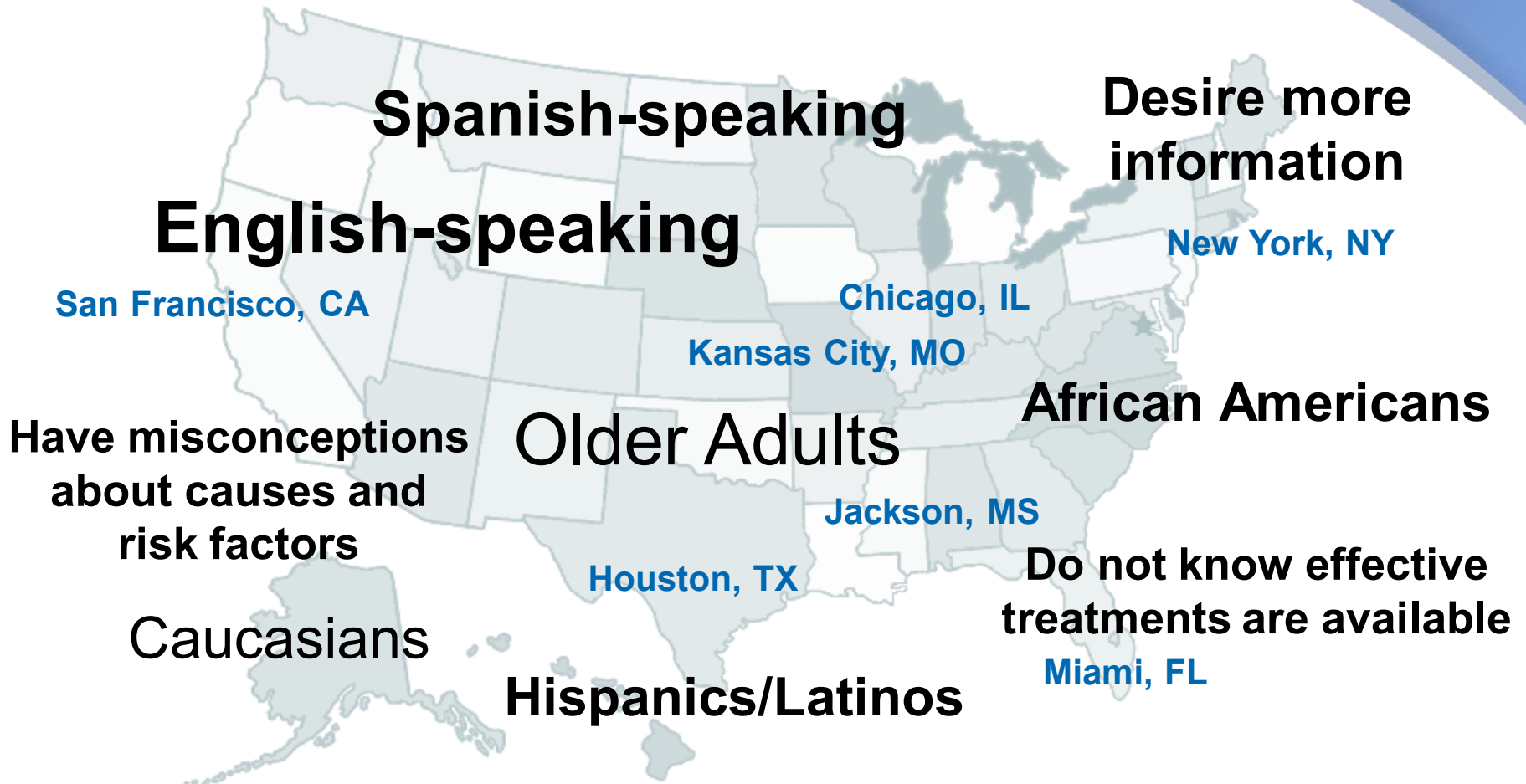
- People at risk for glaucoma should have a comprehensive dilated eye exam every one to two years.
- Glaucoma has no early warning signs or symptoms.
- Glaucoma can be treated through medications or surgery.



Methodology

- A total of 108 focus groups was coordinated.
- Eleven cities across the United States.
- Participants ranged in age from 18 to 70 years old.
- Participants included African Americans, Whites, and Hispanics/Latinos.
- Each group had 8–12 participants; 90 minute sessions.

The surveyed



Purpose of the focus groups

- Gather information from people at higher risk for glaucoma on the following:
 - Perception of the importance of eye health
 - Knowledge of glaucoma
 - Sources of eye health information
 - Health information preferences



Eye health

- Participants stated that vision is taken for granted until problems occur:
 - “I’m a procrastinator. If it isn’t broke, I’m not going to try to fix it.”
 - “People usually delay [getting an eye exam] and don’t make it a priority.”
- Participants stated that vision gets worse over time.
- Participants’ concerns about eye health included:
 - Getting glaucoma
 - Experiencing vision loss
 - Going blind

Eye health practices

- The majority reported having their eyes dilated at least once a year.
- Participants' motivations for getting an eye exam were:
 - Changes in vision
 - Insurance status
 - Family history
 - Doctors' instructions
- Participants stated that cost is a factor in receipt of care.



Knowledge

- Participants were familiar with:
 - The term “glaucoma.”
 - Who is at higher risk for getting glaucoma.
- Participants were less familiar with:
 - The disease, diagnosis, treatment, and long-term effects of glaucoma.
 - The fact that vision loss can be prevented with early detection, proper treatment, and regular eye appointments.

Their “symptoms”

Stars in field
of vision

Increased pressure in
the back of the eye

Loss of sight

Pain that feels like
“a punch with an ice pick”

Headaches

Dizziness

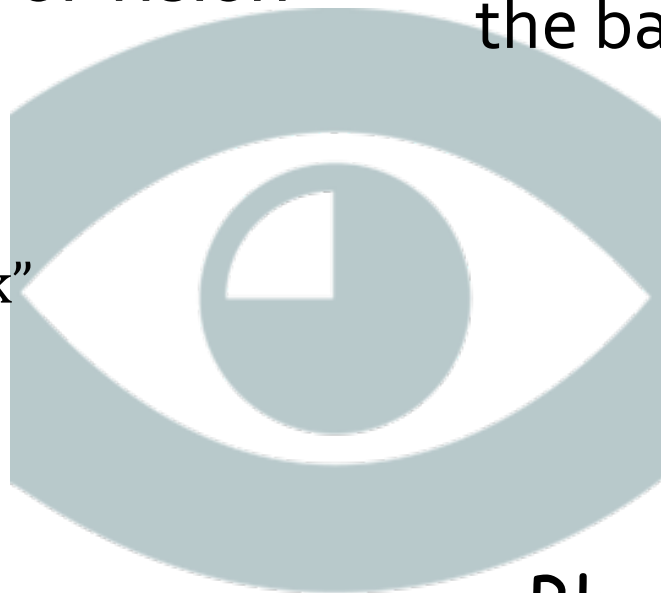
Fluid buildup

Redness

Tearing

Tunnel vision

Blurred, cloudy,
or hazy vision



Their prevention methods

Avoiding harsh temperature changes

Exercising your eyes

Not watching so much television

cleaning eyes internally

Taking out contact lenses before going to sleep

Taking vitamins

Eating carrots

Using glasses

Restricting sweets

Lowering blood pressure

Not using the computer so much

Resting your sight

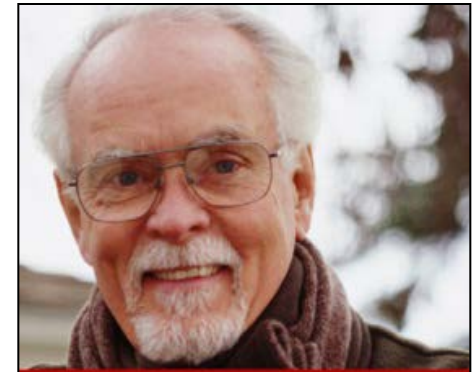
using protective glasses

Not staring at the sun

What they said

Perceptions

- “People, society as a whole, look at glaucoma as an older person’s disease, but babies can have glaucoma, and that’s something we failed to see.”
- “Glaucoma is almost a fact of life for people with high blood pressure and diabetes.”
- “It gets worse and worse. There is no cure for it. Once you develop glaucoma, you just have it.”



What they said

Perceptions

- “I try to ask my husband if he can tell me how much and what he can see, but he tells me he can’t describe it.”
- “Us diabetics have a tendency to suffer of that [glaucoma] when we don’t pay attention to our food, exercise, and proper medicine.”
- “Important conditions like cancer, diabetes, and AIDS capture the media, but there’s nothing on the eyes.”
- “I thought glaucoma and cataracts were pretty much the same. It really didn’t have an effect on me. That’s one reason why I never thought about it.”

Key findings



- Identified their ethnicity as a risk factor for glaucoma.
- Identified the high cost of glasses and eye care as an obstacle to receiving eye care.
- Noted that the motivation of eye care professionals is to get patients to spend money.
- Have seen little in the media about eye care and glaucoma.

Their suggestions

- Work with Medicare to pay for eye exams.
- Provide more information through TV, magazines, or a DVD.
- Develop a multilingual website.
- Partner with drug stores, ophthalmologists, and optometrists.
- Present information that people, regardless of age, should have their eyes checked.
- Schedule a national eye care day.
- Spend more money for research.

Whom do they trust?

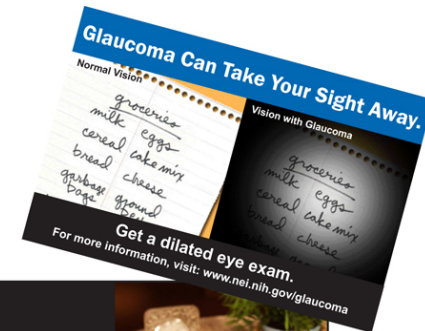
Sources of eye health information



- Physicians
- Family members
- Friends
- Dr. Oz
- CNN (Dr. Gupta)
- WebMD
- AskaNurse.com
- *Arthritis Today*
- *Men's Health*
- Discovery Health Channel

Opportunities for increasing eye health knowledge

- Increase public awareness and education activities.
- Provide more concise information in a variety of formats, including:
 - Fact sheets
 - Brochures/pamphlets
 - Ads in doctors' offices and state departments of motor vehicles
 - Magazines
 - Public service announcements
 - Social media



Opportunities for increasing eye health knowledge

- Improve doctor/patient communication:
 - Doctors taking time to listen and not rushing patients.
 - Doctors asking the right questions.
 - Patients advocating for themselves.
 - Patients making a list of their questions.
- Conduct outreach activities at churches, health fairs, and other community settings.
- Develop mobile units to conduct vision screenings.

Glaucoma resources

<http://www.nei.nih.gov/NEHEP>

Take this Eye-Q test — See how much you know about glaucoma

Millions of Americans are at risk for losing their vision from glaucoma, a leading cause of blindness in the United States. Are you one of them? Find out as you learn how to reduce your risk of blindness. Do you know how high the Eye-Q is, or how to always protect your vision?

1. Glaucoma is more common in African Americans than in Whites.
2. Glaucoma will lead to blindness.
3. A person can have glaucoma and not know it.
4. People over age 40 are more likely to get glaucoma.
5. Eye pain is often a symptom of glaucoma.
6. Glaucoma can be prevented.
7. Glaucoma is caused by increased eye pressure.
8. Younger than 40, glaucoma can be prevented.
9. A regular glaucoma exam can catch most all warning eye pressure.
10. People at risk for glaucoma should have an eye examination through dilated pupils.

To see if you have a perfect Eye-Q score, visit www.nei.nih.gov/eyeq.

Don't Lose Sight of Glaucoma

Information for People at Risk

Take advantage of Medicare benefits for Glaucoma.

Who is eligible?

- A person with Medicare
- Someone with a family history of glaucoma
- Someone who is age 65 or older
- Someone age 18 or older

Medicare will cover an eye exam to detect glaucoma. Take advantage of benefits that may help you fight glaucoma.

Remember: Don't ignore warning signs. If you experience a lot of light in your eyes, there is treatment for glaucoma. See your eye care professional for an expert look!

1-800-878-2269
www.medicare.gov

Glaucoma
What You Should Know

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
National Institutes of Health
National Eye Institute

National Eye Institute, National Institutes of Health

Home » Glaucoma

Information for **Healthy Vision**

Glaucoma Diabetic Eye Disease Low Vision Healthy Eyes

Don't Lose Sight of Glaucoma.

RELATED TOPICS

- [How Much Do You Know?](#)
- [What You Should Know](#)
- [Patient and Provider Perspectives](#)
- [Protecting Your Vision](#)
- [Glaucoma FAQs](#)
- [Spread The Word](#)
- [Glossary](#)
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Glaucoma

Glaucoma is a group of diseases that can damage the eye's optic nerve and result in vision loss and blindness. It is one of the main causes of blindness in the United States. However, with early treatment, you can often protect your eyes against serious vision loss. Therefore it is very important that it be diagnosed.

Protecting Your Vision

Studies have shown that the early detection and treatment of glaucoma, before it causes major vision loss, is the best way to control the disease. So, if you fall into one of the high-risk groups for the disease, make sure to have your eyes examined through dilated pupils every one to two years by an eye care professional. [Read more...](#)

What You Should Know

Help protect your vision and the vision of your relatives and friends. African Americans over age 40, people over 50 years of age, especially those of Mexican descent, and people with relatives that have had the illness can run a high risk of having glaucoma. [Read more...](#)

RESOURCES

- [What is a comprehensive dilated eye exam?](#)
- [Find an eye care professional](#)
- [Talking to your doctor](#)
- [Financial aid for eye care](#)

Keep Vision in Your Future: Glaucoma Toolkit



- Designed to help you increase awareness about glaucoma.
- Includes a PowerPoint presentation, speaker's guide, participant handouts, and more.
- Visit the Toolkit Web page:

<http://www.nei.nih.gov/GlaucomaToolkit>

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Publish our widget on your site

NEI Healthy Eyes Quiz

Glaucoma is more common in African Americans than in Whites.

True
False

www.nei.nih.gov/healthyyes

2 of 4 Share this widget.

NEI Healthy Eyes Quiz

You Chose True - correct

Answer

True. Glaucoma is a leading cause of blindness in African Americans and can affect them at a younger age. Download the [Glaucoma: What you should know](#) booklet to learn more.

NEXT QUESTION >>

www.nei.nih.gov/healthyyes

2 of 4 Share this widget.

Use our YouTube videos

National Eye Institute - Glaucoma

YouTube Browse Movies

Glaucoma

NIHOD 262 videos

0:59 / 2:16 360p

Social media



The image shows a screenshot of the Facebook page for the National Eye Health Education Program (NEHEP). The page header includes the Facebook logo, a search bar, and the page name "National Eye Health Education Program" with a "Like" button. Below the header, there is a "Wall" section with a post from NEHEP. The post features a photograph of a waterfall and a boat, with the text: "Cataract is derived from the Latin word for waterfall. A cataract happens when the lens in the eye becomes cloudy and blurry." The post has 251 likes and 29 comments. The left sidebar contains navigation options like "Wall", "Info", "Friend Activity", "Photos", "Links", "Privacy Policy", and "Questions".

The image shows a screenshot of the Twitter profile for the National Eye Health Education Program (NEHEP). The profile header includes the Twitter logo, a search bar, and navigation links for "Home", "Profile", and "Messages". The profile name is "NEHEP" with the handle "@NEHEP" and location "Bethesda, MD". The bio reads: "The National Eye Health Education Program (NEHEP) is part of the National Eye Institute, National Institutes of Health." and includes the URL "http://www.nei.nih.gov/nehep/". Below the profile information, there is an "Edit your profile" link and a "Tweets" section. The first tweet is from NEHEP, dated 22 hours ago, with the text: "Don't take risks with your vision. If you have glaucoma, learn how to protect one of your best assets. Visit [nei.nih.gov/glaucoma/conte...](\"http://nei.nih.gov/glaucoma/conte...\")". The second tweet is also from NEHEP, dated 15 Aug, with the text: "Back to school? Back to the classroom! Download posters and share 31 fun facts about the eyes with your students @ [catalog.nei.nih.gov/p-328-eye-fact...](\"http://catalog.nei.nih.gov/p-328-eye-fact...\")".



Questions?

For more resources, please visit

<http://www.nei.nih.gov/nehep>



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