**News Release**

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**The Health Exam You Didn’t Know You Needed**

[INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME] *and the American Academy of Ophthalmology say blindness is often preventable with regular exams*

<INSERT CITY, STATE>– [INSERT DATE] — If you’re like most Americans surveyed in a recent [Harris Poll](https://www.aao.org/newsroom/news-releases/detail/survey-reveals-most-americans-know-less-eye-health), you probably thought you would notice a change in your vision if you had an eye disease. The fact is some of the leading causes of blindness—such as [glaucoma](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/what-is-glaucoma) or [diabetic retinopathy](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/what-is-diabetic-retinopathy)—can begin without any symptoms. That’s why [INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME] and the [American Academy of Ophthalmology](http://www.aao.org/) urge all healthy adults to get an [eye exam](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/eye-exams-101) at age 40, even if their vision seems fine. Early signs of disease and changes in vision may start to happen at this age.

“Even if you think you have 20/20 vision, set up a time to get your eyes checked. It may save your sight,” said Dianna Seldomridge, M.D., clinical spokesperson for the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

[INSERT YOUR SPOKESPERSON’S QUOTE HERE]

Need more motivation to have your eyes examined? Here are four good reasons to see [an ophthalmologist](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/what-is-ophthalmologist#:~:text=Ophthalmic%20medical%20assistants%20help%20physicians,with%20examining%20and%20treating%20patients.):

1. Your brain adapts to vision loss, making some eye diseases go unnoticed until it is too late. Once vision is lost, it cannot be restored. Ophthalmologists can spot eye disease before vision is compromised and protect your sight.
2. Seeing an ophthalmologist can improve not just your eye health, but your overall health. Because the blood vessels and nerves in your eye are reflective of the rest of your body, ophthalmologists are sometimes the first to [diagnose diseases](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/surprising-health-conditions-eye-exam-detects) such as diabetes, multiple sclerosis, or vitamin deficiencies.
3. Your eye health is dependent on different factors, including family history, ethnicity, age, and overall health. An ophthalmologist can help evaluate your personal risk factors and recommend the best steps for disease prevention.
4. Eye disease is also a looming problem for the U.S. healthcare system. As our population ages, the number of people afflicted with vision loss is expected to [double by 2050](https://www.cdc.gov/visionhealth/basics/ced/fastfacts.htm).

For more tips and information, visit [www.eyesmart.org](http://www.eyesmart.org/).

**Some Seniors May Be Eligible for a Free Eye Exam**

For individuals age 65 or older who are concerned about their risk of eye disease, you may be eligible for a medical eye exam, often at no out-of-pocket cost, through the American Academy of Ophthalmology’s EyeCare America®program. This public service program matches volunteer ophthalmologists with eligible patients in need of eye care across the United States. To see if you or a loved one qualifies, visit [EyeCare America](https://www.aao.org/eyecare-america) to determine your eligibility. EyeCare America is co-sponsored by the Knights Templar Eye Foundation Inc., with additional support provided by Alcon and Regeneron.

**About the American Academy of Ophthalmology**

The American Academy of Ophthalmology is the world’s largest association of eye physicians and surgeons. A global community of 32,000 medical doctors, we protect sight and empower lives by setting the standards for ophthalmic education and advocating for our patients and the public. We innovate to advance our profession and to ensure the delivery of the highest-quality eye care. Our EyeSmart® program provides the public with the most trusted information about eye health. For more information, visit [aao.org](http://www.aao.org/).

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