



PREVENT BLINDNESS AMERICA FACT SHEET

Vision Impairment and Blindness

- According to the World Health Organization, **more than 180 million people worldwide are blind or are at serious risk of becoming blind.**
- **Blindness ranked third**, following cancer and heart disease, as the foremost health concern among Americans.
- More than 1 million Americans are considered legally blind, **while 80 million Americans are at risk of developing potentially blinding eye conditions.**
- Seventy-five percent of adults – or nearly 170 million people – in the United States use vision correction for visual impairment. More than half of these users (52.7 percent) are women.
- **Slightly more than 12 million adults in the United States need some form of vision correction, but don't seek help.**
- Vision impairment is defined as eyesight of 20/40 or worse in the better eye even with corrective eyewear.
- Blindness is defined by U.S. standards as best-corrected visual capacity of 20/200 or worse.
- **Seventy-five percent of the cases of blindness globally could have been prevented** or treated at an early stage.

The Financial Implications of Vision Health

- **The annual estimated cost associated with adult vision diseases in the United States is \$51.4 billion** and includes age-related macular degeneration (AMD), cataract, diabetic retinopathy, primary open-angle glaucoma and refractive error.
 - The estimate is a combination of costs to the individual, caregivers and overall U.S. economy:
 - Costs to the individual and caregivers (\$16 billion)
 - Impact on U.S. economy (\$35.4 billion)
- The average lifetime cost for one person with vision impairment is estimated to be \$566,000 (in 2003 dollars).
- It is estimated that the lifetime costs for all people with vision impairment who were born in 2000 will total \$2.5 billion (in 2003 dollars).
- **The U.S. ophthalmic market was \$9.6 billion in 2006 and is expected to grow to approximately \$13.8 billion by 2011.**

Estimated Prevalence of Eye Diseases and Conditions Among U.S. Adults

- **Blindness** – 1.05 million Americans are legally blind
- **Age-related Macular Degeneration** – 1.7 million (aged 50 and older) are diagnosed with wet age-related macular degeneration
- **Cataract** – Nearly 20.5 million Americans have cataracts
- **Diabetic Retinopathy** – 5.3 million Americans (over age 18) have diabetic retinopathy
- **Glaucoma** – 2.2 million people suffer from glaucoma

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