



Eye on Health

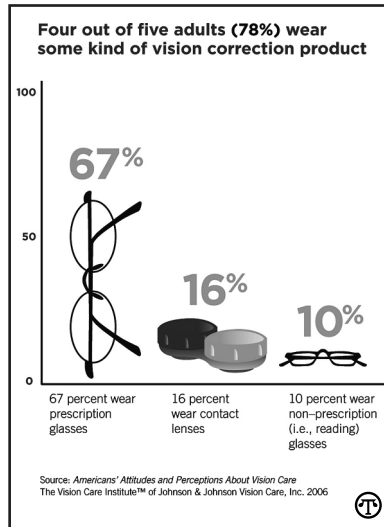
Americans Are Out Of Focus On Proper Vision Care New Survey Shows

(NAPSA)—While most Americans visit their doctor annually and their dentist twice a year, a new survey shows that many adults do not prioritize, for themselves or their children, two of their most vital body parts—their eyes. The survey also reveals alarming statistics that demonstrate among certain ethnic groups, a gap between vision care knowledge and behavior, which may be preventing those who are at the greatest risk of certain eye conditions from seeking proper treatment and diagnosis.

More than nine out of 10 respondents agree that maintaining proper vision is an important priority to them and three-quarters agree that taking care of their eyes is as important as other health issues, such as diabetes or high blood pressure. Yet, 14 percent say they do not have a regular eye care professional and one-quarter say it has been more than two years since their last eye exam. Further, one-third of parents report that their child has never seen an eye care professional.

More than 3,700 adults of varying ethnic backgrounds (Hispanics, African-Americans, Asian-Americans, and Caucasians) expressed their attitudes toward, perceptions of, and experiences with vision care in the nationwide Americans' Attitudes and Perceptions About Vision Care survey, which was conducted by Harris Interactive® on behalf of The Vision Care Institute™ of Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc.

“While the survey shows a great deal of similarities and common beliefs about vision care



among people of different ethnic backgrounds, it's also a cause for concern because adults and children who are at greater risk for certain eye conditions and diseases are not receiving proper diagnosis and treatment,” says Dr. Derrick Artis, director, professional affairs at Vistakon® Division of Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc. “Early detection and treatment of vision and eye health issues can help lessen or prevent permanent visual impairment.”

Varying Perceptions Among Ethnic Groups

Among groups surveyed:

African-Americans were the most likely to strongly agree that maintaining proper vision is an important priority and that taking care of their eyes is as important as other health issues. However, African-Americans were most likely to report that they do not have a regular eye care professional.

More than one-quarter of Hispanic respondents strongly agreed that they are very concerned about their vision getting worse, compared to only 15 percent of all respondents. Despite concerns about worsening vision, Hispanics were least likely to have seen an eye care professional in the last year.

Nine out of 10 Asian-Americans agreed that maintaining proper vision is an important priority, but more than one-third said that they do not need an eye exam unless they are having a vision problem. Asian-Americans were also the least likely of groups surveyed to believe that vision correction will greatly improve activities such as driving, work performance, reading performance and computer work.

Despite a majority of Caucasians believing that people should get their eyes examined at least annually, one-quarter have not seen an eye care professional in the past two years.

“Like many diseases, vision problems can disproportionately affect certain ethnic groups. For example, African-Americans are five times more likely to have glaucoma, Hispanics are at the greatest risk for cataracts, and myopia or nearsightedness is much more common among Asians than other ethnic groups,” adds Dr. Dan Desrivieres, president, National Optometric Association. “Seeing an eye care professional regularly may not only assess your vision and need for updated prescriptions, it may help identify and lead to a diagnosis of other health concerns such as hypertension and diabetes.”