

**Behavioral problems are a sign that your child's vision may be impaired.**

Agree:	56%
Disagree:	44%

Alarming, 44% of parents don't realize that behavioral problems can be an indication that a child's vision is impaired. Other signs that may indicate a child is having difficulty seeing include squinting while reading or watching television, headaches, lower classroom grades or tilting their head when viewing an object.

**When should a child have their first eye exam?**

Within first year of age:	10%
Between 1 and 2 years:	7%
Between 3 and 4 years:	13%
Age 5 or older:	37%
Never:	29%
Don't know/refused:	5%

Only 1 in 10 parents adhere to eye doctors' recommendations of having an infant's eyes examined prior to their first birthday. Nearly one-third (29%) of all children have never been to an eye doctor.

**Methodology**

The American Optometric Association's inaugural **American Eye-Q™** survey was created in conjunction with Opinion Research Corporation (ORC). Using a random digit dialing methodology, ORC interviewed 1,000 Americans 18 years and older who embodied a nationally representative sample of U.S. households. The margin of error is ±3.1 percent for the general population. All data is weighted to represent the U.S. general population with respect to age, gender and geographic region.

For more information on the American Optometric Association's **American Eye-Q™**, please contact Susan Thomas at 314-991-4100, ext. 4263 or Liz Dvorachek at 312-255-3036.



# American Eye-Q™

## Report Card

Name: American Adults

Year: 2006

KNOWLEDGE OF:	GRADE:				
Behaviors and foods that affect the eyes	A	B	C	D	F
Difference between an eye exam and a screening	A	B	C	D	F
Factors to consider when choosing sunglasses	A	B	C	D	F
Frequency adults should go to an eye doctor	A	B	C	D	F
Health conditions detectable through an eye exam	A	B	C	D	F
Importance of children wearing sunglasses	A	B	C	D	F
Signs that may indicate a child has vision problems	A	B	C	D	F
When a child's first eye exam should occur	A	B	C	D	F

**Report Card Comments**

With summer coming to an end, millions of students nationwide are heading back to school, but according to the results of the American Optometric Association's first **American Eye-Q™** survey, parents are the ones in need of a better education. An alarming number of adults are failing themselves and their children when it comes to proper eye care. The **American Eye-Q™** survey, conducted to evaluate adults' level of knowledge and their behaviors associated with eye care, found that an overwhelming percentage of Americans lack the knowledge and awareness needed in order to preserve the health and functionality of one of their most valued senses – their eyesight.

## Following are the survey results from the areas in which Americans need to be better educated.

### Which of the following behaviors is bad for your eyes?

Reading under dim lights:	88%
Sitting too close to the television:	82%
Smoking cigarettes:	75%
Drinking alcohol:	64%
Drinking caffeine:	33%
None of the above:	1%

Considerable misconceptions exist around behaviors that may be harmful to one's eyes. More than 8 out of 10 adults believe that sitting too close to the television and reading under dim lights will affect their vision. While they both may cause headaches, they won't weaken your sight. Smoking and drinking alcohol and caffeine, however, can be harmful on the eyes.

### Which food is best for your eye health?

Carrots	70%
Broccoli	12%
Spinach	11%
Apples	2%
All equally good	1%
None of the above	3%

Nutrition is important to maintain good eye health, and surprisingly, Americans can do better; 70% of Americans mistakenly believe that carrots are the best food for their eye health, when in fact it has been proven that spinach and broccoli are better foods for eye health. Eating the equivalent of 1/2 cup of cooked spinach 4-7 times per week can protect against age-related macular degeneration, the leading cause of blindness in the U.S. It would take 4 pounds of carrots or 17 cups of iceberg lettuce to meet the same goal.

### When you purchase sunglasses do you always check to see if they have UV protection?

Yes, always check	68%
No, do not check	27%
Don't know	5%

While a majority of American adults make sure their sunglasses have UV protection – it's very important that everyone understands the damage caused to eyes by UV-A and UV-B rays occurs gradually and is irreversible. Ironically, sunglasses that have not been treated for UV rays may be more detrimental to your eyes than not wearing sunglasses at all. Dark lenses reduce the amount of light entering the eye, causing the pupil to dilate. This exposes the inside of your eye to more UV radiation than without the sunglasses.

### How often should adults go to an eye doctor?\*

Visited eye doctor within the past two years:	38%
Within the past three to four years:	14%
Five or more years ago:	27%
Never:	18%
Don't know:	4%

(\*respondents who do not use any form of vision correction)

Americans admit that their eye health and sight is important to them, yet 62% of Americans who do not currently wear glasses or contacts have not been to an eye doctor in the past two years as clinical guidelines recommend. A person's eyesight can change rapidly and frequently, particularly in older adults, therefore, it is imperative that adults visit their optometrist at least every other year for a comprehensive eye exam.

### What health conditions can be detected during eye exams?

Diabetes:	65%
Hypertension:	62%
Brain tumor:	46%
Cardiovascular disease:	39%
Multiple sclerosis:	23%
None of the above:	10%

Americans lack awareness of how many systemic diseases and disorders are detectable through comprehensive eye exams. In fact, all of the above can be detected through a comprehensive eye exam. More than three-fourths (77%) of Americans are not aware that multiple sclerosis can be detected by a comprehensive eye exam.