



Eye Health Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices Among Hispanics/Latinos

Background

The National Eye Institute (NEI) and the Lions Clubs International Foundation conducted a national survey to assess public knowledge, attitudes, and practices around eye health and disease. More than 3,000 adults were selected at random to participate in this national telephone survey, which was conducted between October 2005 and January 2006. Four percent of the interviews were completed in Spanish.

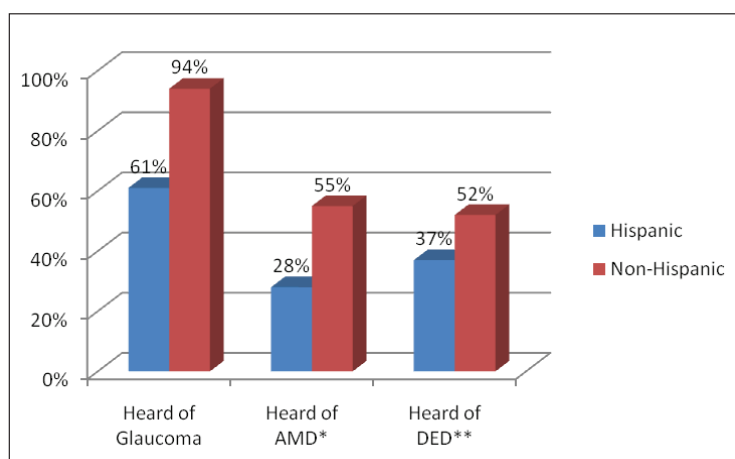
Prevalence Rates of Eye Disease

Compared with other racial/ethnic groups, Hispanics experience disproportionate prevalence rates of certain eye diseases.

- Hispanics/Latinos are more likely to have higher prevalence rates of diabetic retinopathy than Caucasians and African Americans.¹
- Older Hispanics/Latinos (>65 years) are more likely to have higher prevalence rates of glaucoma than Caucasians.²

Knowledge About Eye Disease³

Results of this national survey showed that, compared with other racial/ethnic groups, Hispanics/Latinos knew the least about eye health. Only 37 percent reported ever hearing of diabetic eye disease.



Percentage of Hispanic and Non-Hispanic adults who have heard of three eye diseases

¹Eye Diseases Prevalence Research Group. (2004). The prevalence of diabetic retinopathy among adults in the United States. *Archives of Ophthalmology*, 122, 552-563.

²Eye Diseases Prevalence Research Group. (2004). Prevalence of open-angle glaucoma among adults in the United States. *Archives of Ophthalmology*, 122, 532-538.

³National Eye Institute & Lions Clubs International Foundation. (2007). *2005 survey of public knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to eye health and disease*. Bethesda, MD: National Eye Institute. Retrieved from: <http://www.nei.nih.gov/nehep/kap/>

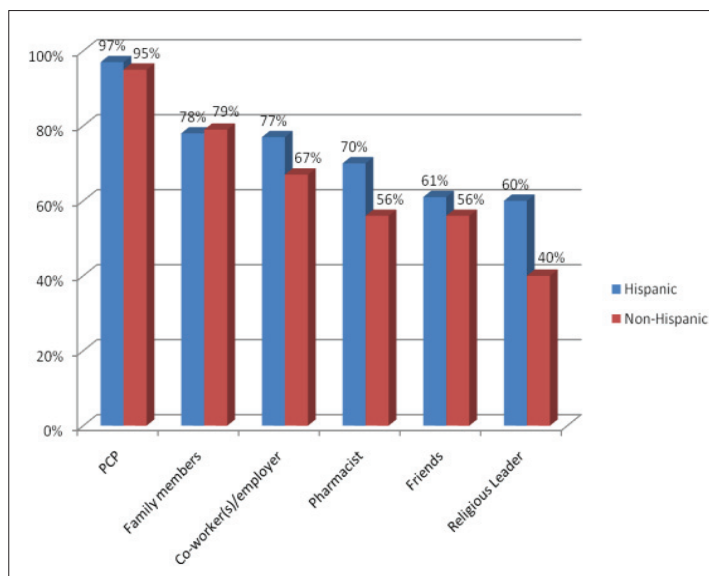
Eye Health Practices³

Compared with non-Hispanic adults, Hispanics/Latinos had the lowest rates of dilated eye exams. Sixty-nine percent of Hispanic/Latino adults and 94 percent of non-Hispanic/Latino adults reported having had their eyes examined sometime in the past by a healthcare provider. Of these, 56 percent reported having had their eyes dilated during the exam.

The top four reasons among Hispanic/Latino adults for having had an eye exam are as follows:

- For a regular check up (45%)
- Had trouble seeing (17%)
- Needed new eye glasses or contact lenses (10%)
- Had an eye infection, injury, or eye disease (6%)

Primary care providers, family members, and coworkers have the most influence when recommending an eye exam.



Percentage of Hispanic and Non-Hispanic adults somewhat likely to get eyes examined by recommending party

Communicating About Eye Health³

Hispanic/Latino respondents reported the lowest access to eye health information. Forty-one percent reported that they had not seen or heard anything about eye health or disease in the past year, compared with 28 percent of Asians/Pacific Islanders, 26 percent of African Americans, and 16 percent of Caucasians.

Television programs and commercials, doctors' offices, and newspapers and magazines are the top three sources for eye health or disease information among Hispanics/Latinos.

Conclusions

- Hispanic/Latino respondents knew the least about eye health, were the least likely to have their eyes examined, and reported the lowest access to eye health information among all racial/ethnic groups participating in the survey.
- There is an ongoing need to increase knowledge and awareness about eye diseases and the crucial role comprehensive dilated eye examinations play in preserving sight.

Addressing the Eye Health Needs of Hispanics/Latinos

NEI's National Eye Health Education Program, through its ¡Ojo con su visión! (Watch out for your vision!) program, has developed an assortment of culturally appropriate, health-literate, and evidence-based resources. Materials are available in English and Spanish and focus on educating Hispanics/Latinos about protecting their sight by getting a dilated eye exam at least once a year, timely treatment, and appropriate follow-up care for eye diseases.

To learn more about promoting eye health in Hispanic/Latino communities, please visit www.nei.nih.gov/nehep/programs/ojo/index.asp.

To read the full report from this national survey, visit www.nei.nih.gov/kap.