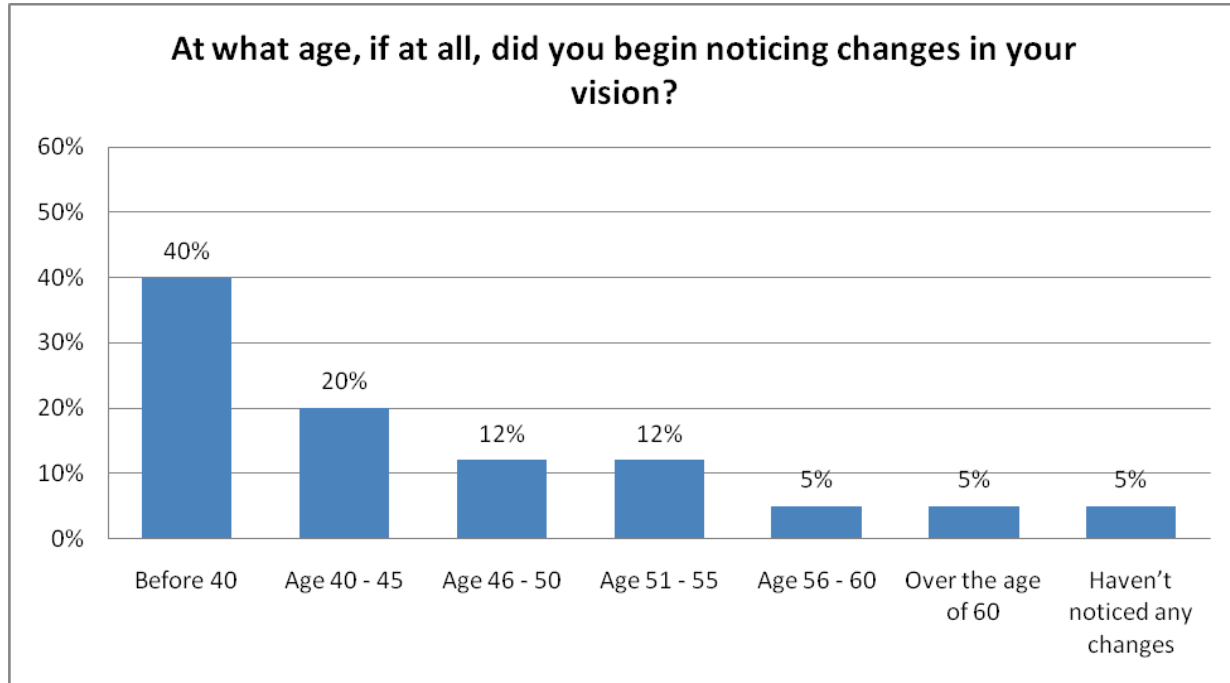


MOST BABY BOOMERS AFFECTED BY VISION DISORDERS

COMPREHENSIVE EYE EXAMS ARE CRITICAL TO MAINTAIN HEALTHY SIGHT

According to the American Optometric Association's (AOA) American Eye-Q® survey, nearly all (95 percent) respondents age 55 and older reported noticing changes in their vision, and 40 percent of respondents noticed these changes even before age 40.



The prevalence of eye diseases and disorders is expected to grow. In fact, over the next 30 years, the number of blind or visually impaired Americans will double due to the growing aging baby boomer population, according to The National Eye Institute.

Vision disorders baby boomers and seniors should be aware of include macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, cataracts, glaucoma and dry eye.

- Results from the AOA's American Eye-Q® survey found **85 percent of respondents did not know macular degeneration was the leading cause of blindness** in adults age 65 and older.
- Many patients in the early stages of diabetic retinopathy experience no visual signs or symptoms, which is why the AOA recommends everyone with diabetes have a comprehensive, dilated eye examination annually. **Early detection and treatment of diabetic retinopathy can limit the potential for significant vision loss.**
- Most cataracts form because of age-related changes in the lens. However, **diabetes, certain medications, exposure to UV radiation, smoking, drinking excessive amounts of alcohol and nutritional deficiencies can contribute to cataract development.**
- Glaucoma, the second leading cause of blindness, cannot be prevented, but if diagnosed and treated early it can usually be controlled. **Medication or surgery can slow or prevent further vision loss.**
- The majority of people over age 65 experience some symptoms of dry eye.

For additional information about aging eyes or to find a doctor of optometry in your area, please visit www.AOA.org **[and/or state association's Web site and/or state association's toll-free telephone number]**.