Black Seniors at Risk for Some Eye Diseases; Exams Recommended

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This April, as part of health awareness activities during National Minority Health Month, the American Academy of Ophthalmology is reminding black folks, especially seniors, of their risks of eye disease, reported Insight News.

According to the organization, African Americans are more than twice as likely to develop retinal damage from diabetes, four times more likely to go blind from glaucoma and at a much higher risk of cataracts than Caucasians or other American ethnic groups. This is why doctors are urging African-American seniors to get comprehensive dilated eye exams to find problems early and stop vision loss.

Since most eye diseases have no early symptoms, the only way for doctors to detect these illnesses is through dilated eye exams. These tests magnify the physiology of the eye so the organ may be evaluated by an expert. The one-time exam uncovers many risk factors, such as abnormal vessel growth in the eyes, damage to the optic nerve and inappropriate pupil responses that may mark early signs of life-long vision problems.

“The first line of defense against eye disease is to get an eye exam and find out if there’s a problem,” said Richard P. Mills, MD, the chairman of EyeCare America, a public service program founded by the American Academy of Ophthalmology. The campaign, founded in 2007, offers free eye exams and up to one year of care with no out-of-pocket expenses for at-risk seniors who qualify.

Hypertension and diabetes can also increase the risk for developing common eye diseases. Click here to read more.

For more on EyeCare America, click here.

To read the Insight article, click here.

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/eye-exams-23848-5925