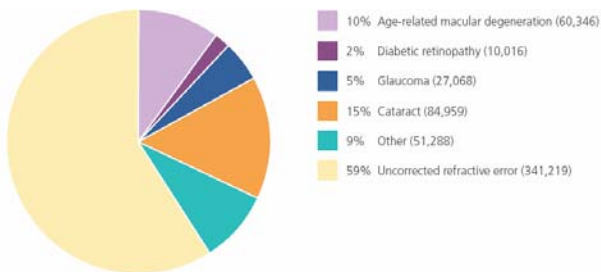


Eye health and vision care in Australia

Vision loss by cause among Australians aged 40 or over, 2009



Access Economics (2010), Clear Focus - The Economic Impact of Vision Loss in Australia in 2009

Did you know?

In 2009, almost 575,000 Australians over 40 had vision loss representing 5.8 per cent of the population in that age group.

This number is predicted to rise to almost 801,000 by 2020 unless people are proactive about saving their sight.

Causes of vision loss in Australia

Eighty per cent of blindness and vision impairment is caused by five main conditions (listed in alphabetical order)

- Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD)
- cataract
- diabetic retinopathy
- glaucoma
- uncorrected and under corrected refractive error.

What's the good news?

The good news is that almost 75 per cent of vision loss is preventable or treatable.

Saving sight could be as easy as having regular eye tests.

Eye tests can be arranged through a general practitioner, optometrist or by referral to an ophthalmologist.

The Vision Initiative partnership is committed to promoting eye health and vision care.

Remember regular eye tests will help detect any problems at an early stage and allow for the best treatment.

Protect your eyes

- When in the sun by wearing sunglasses and a hat to prevent ultraviolet damage.
- When performing Do-It-Yourself activities by wearing eye protection goggles or glasses.
- When playing sport, especially squash, by wearing appropriate protective sports glasses.
- Stop smoking.

Ensure you are not adding to the statistics

If a change in vision is noticed, arrange an eye examination without delay.

It is important that you have regular eye tests if

- there is a family history of eye disease
- you have diabetes
- you are over the age of 40 years
- you are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.

For more information on eye health visit www.visioninitiative.org.au