

## Information for Action # 2011-10

New Yorkers may not be aware of the important role regular eye exams play in preventing eye disease and saving vision.

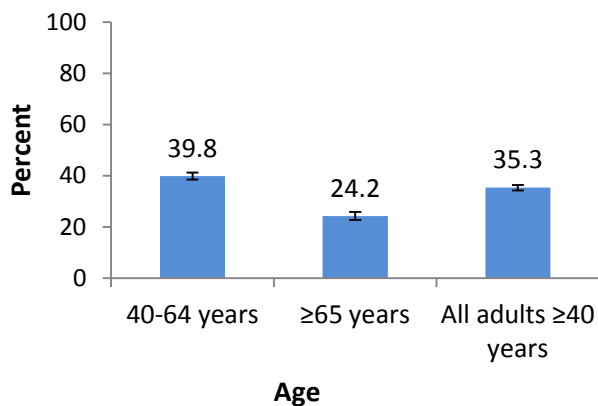
### Quick facts:

- In New York State, approximately 1 in 3 adults aged 40 years or older had not had their eyes examined by a doctor or eye care provider within the past 12 months (see Figure 1).
- Nearly half (47.0%) of the adults who had not had their eyes examined by a doctor or eye care provider within the past 12 months reported that they had no reason to go (see Figure 2).
- Older adults were more likely to cite “no reason to go” as the main explanation for not visiting an eye care professional within the past 12 months, with 55.0% of respondents aged 65 years or older reporting that they had no reason to go to an eye care professional, compared to 45.2% of respondents aged 40-64 years (see Figure 2).

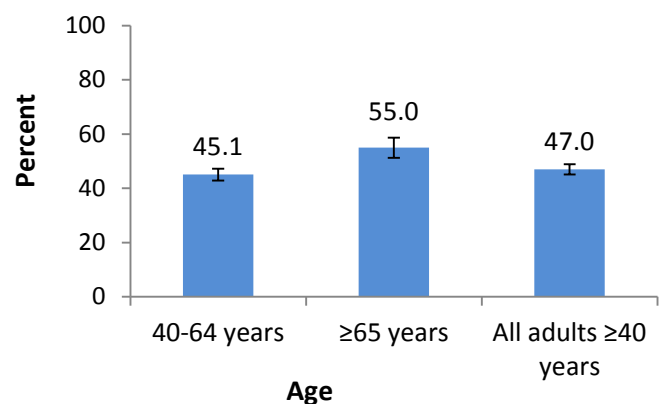
### Public health importance:

- Most adults may start to experience problems with their vision after the age of 40 years.<sup>1</sup>
- The prevalence of blindness and vision impairment increases rapidly with age among all racial and ethnic groups, particularly among people older than 75 years.<sup>2</sup>
- Although many vision problems are initially asymptomatic, regular dilated eye examinations can help to delay or limit their progression, particularly if detected early.<sup>3</sup>

**Figure 1. Percentage of NYS adults aged 40 years or older with no eye examination by a doctor or eye care provider within the past 12 months, by age, 2006-2008.**



**Figure 2. Among NYS adults aged 40 years or older with no eye examination within the past 12 months, percentage who reported “no reason to go,” by age, 2006-2008.**



Data Source: Combined 2006-2008 NYS Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

### PUBLIC HEALTH OPPORTUNITY

Educate adults aged 40 years and older about the reasons to receive regularly scheduled eye examinations by a qualified physician or an eye care professional. Early detection can help to delay or limit the progression of age-related eye diseases.

### Contact:

For more information about the data included and their specific implications for action, please send an email to [DCDIPIFA@health.state.ny.us](mailto:DCDIPIFA@health.state.ny.us) with the IFA #10 in the subject line.

### References

1. <http://www.aoa.org/x9453.sml> (accessed March 18, 2011)
2. Prevent Blindness America, National Eye Institute. *The Vision Problems in the U.S.: Prevalence of Adult Vision Impairment and Age-Related Eye Disease in America*. Bethesda, MD:National Institutes of Health;2008.
3. Sloan FA, Picone G, Brown DS, Lee PP. Longitudinal analysis of the relationship between regular eye examinations and changes in visual and functional status. *J Am Geriatr Soc* 2005;53:1867-74.