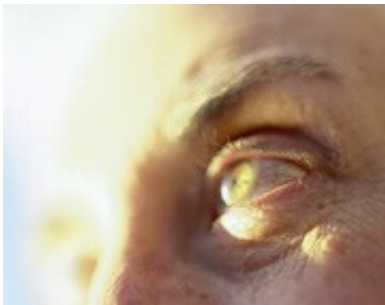


# Glaucoma screening not for everyone, experts say

July 9 2013

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Too little evidence that test benefits adults without vision problems, panel finds.

(HealthDay)—Not enough evidence exists to recommend that primary-care doctors screen for glaucoma in adults who do not have vision problems, according to the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force.

Although there are many new treatments for [glaucoma](#), the task force concluded there is too little evidence available to determine how best to screen for and diagnose glaucoma in adults with no signs or symptoms of [vision problems](#). Also, there is not enough evidence to show that screening reduces the likelihood of [vision loss](#) and blindness.

"Glaucoma is a serious disease that can cause vision problems and blindness in millions of Americans," task force co-vice chairman Dr. Albert Siu said in a news release. "Unfortunately, we don't have enough evidence to know how best to screen for the disease and who would

benefit from screening in the primary-care setting."

The task force's review of evidence focused on primary open-angle glaucoma, which is the most common form of the disease and affects about 2.5 million Americans, according to the news release. This type of glaucoma progresses slowly, and people may not have symptoms of gradual vision loss until the disease is advanced.

Older adults and blacks have a higher risk of developing glaucoma.

The newly released recommendation applies specifically to screening adults without vision problems in primary-care settings. People with vision problems should continue to see their primary-care doctor or eye-care specialist to determine which tests and treatments they need.

"We call on the health care community to conduct critically needed research on effective screening tests and treatments for glaucoma," Siu said. "Findings from new research may be able to improve the lives of many Americans and help the task force update its recommendation in the future."

The recommendation appeared online July 9 in the journal *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

**More information:** The U.S. National Eye Institute has more about [glaucoma](#).

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