

Ophthalmologists underrepresented in Google searches

October 26 2022



In most U.S. counties, a Google search of the phrase "eye doctor near

me" may underrepresent ophthalmologists, according to a study published online Oct. 20 in *JAMA Ophthalmology*.

Rebecca R. Soares, M.D., from Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia, and colleagues examined how well [ophthalmologists](#) are represented in a Google search of the phrase "eye doctor near me." The analysis included geographic coordinates for 2,955 county centroids in the United States (June 30, 2021), with the top 10 sites and three Google map links assessed.

The researchers found that the overall mean proportion of ophthalmologists from the Google search of all counties was 4,726.97 of 16,345.93 (28.91 percent), which was less than the real proportion of optometrists (15,778 of 41,975; 37.58 percent), yielding a difference of 8.67 percent. Google underrepresented ophthalmologists in 35 of 52 [states](#) and territories (67.3 percent).

"Google search of the phrase 'eye doctor near me' may underrepresent ophthalmologists, potentially undervaluing the role ophthalmologists play as eye care professionals," the authors write. "Ophthalmologists may want to pursue [search engine optimization](#) to try to achieve balanced representation online."

More information: Rebecca R. Soares et al, A Geographic Analysis of Google Characterizations of Who Is an "Eye Doctor" Across the US, *JAMA Ophthalmology* (2022). [DOI: 10.1001/jamaophthalmol.2022.4343](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamaophthalmol.2022.4343)

Jayanth Sridhar, Blurred Vision—A Call to Action to Improve Public Education on Eye Clinician Differences, *JAMA Ophthalmology* (2022). [DOI: 10.1001/jamaophthalmol.2022.4354](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamaophthalmol.2022.4354)

Citation: Ophthalmologists underrepresented in Google searches (2022, October 26) retrieved 20 June 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2022-10-ophthalmologists-underrepresented-google.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.