

## **Facts About Blindness and Eye Health**

### **Worldwide**

---

- Somewhere in the world, someone goes blind every five seconds.
- A child goes blind every minute.
- Eighty percent of all blindness is preventable or curable.
- It is estimated that at least 7 million people go blind every year.
- Worldwide some 180 million people are blind or visually disabled—the equivalent of two-thirds of the entire U.S. population.
- Rates of blindness will double by the year 2020 unless prevention efforts are intensified.
- People in developing countries represent 90 percent of the world's blind population and are 10 times more likely to go blind than those in developed countries.
- Africa averages just one ophthalmologist for every 1.25 million people.

### **In the US**

---

- By age 65, one in three Americans has some form of vision impairing eye disease.
- Of the 119 million people in the United States who are age 40 or over, 3.4 million are visually impaired or blind. This level of blindness and visual impairment costs more than \$4 billion annually in benefits and lost income.
- In California, over 13,000,000 people are age 40 or over, and 356,000 are visually impaired or blind. This represents approximately 10% of all visual impairment and blindness in the United States.
- People with diabetes are 25 times more likely to become blind than people without diabetes.
- Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness in the United States, and the most common cause of blindness among African Americans.
- Nearly three million people have glaucoma, but half do not realize it because there are often no warning symptoms.