

# News Release

**EMBARGOED UNTIL JUNE 4 at 10:00 AM CT**

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## **CDC Study Finds Shift in Vision Impairment Trends Among Adults with Diabetes**

*Improvements in Vision Impairment and Diabetes Plateaued in the Last Decade*

**NEW ORLEANS, La. (June 4, 2022)** – A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) study provides new insights into vision impairment (VI) prevalence over the last 20 years. The findings demonstrate that declines in VI among adults with diabetes seen in the first decade of the 2000s may have plateaued in 2012. The findings were presented at the 82<sup>nd</sup> Scientific Sessions of the American Diabetes Association® (ADA) in New Orleans, LA.

Diabetic retinopathy is a common and serious complication of diabetes that occurs when blood vessels in the retina are damaged by high blood glucose (blood sugar) and is the leading cause of incident blindness among working-age adults. A previous study examining the period from 1997 to 2010 found a decline in self-reported VI prevalence among adults with diabetes. This study examined whether previously reported declines in VI among adults with diabetes have continued in recent years.

Researchers examined 20-year trends (1999–2018) in VI prevalence among adults 18 years and older with diagnosed diabetes, using self-reported data from the U.S. National Health Interview Survey with more than 52,000 respondents. Annual prevalence is presented as single years and a three-year moving average, age-standardized to the 2010 U.S. Census. Trends were analyzed using Joinpoint regression with single years of data.

The findings indicate that declines in VI among adults with diabetes seen in the first decade of the century may have plateaued in 2012. Using the three-year moving average, the prevalence of adults with diabetes who reported VI decreased from 21.5% in 1999 to 20.7% in 2018. This trend was not statistically significant (annual percent change [APC]: -0.47;  $p=0.2$ ). However, Joinpoint regression found distinct trends, with VI prevalence decreasing significantly from 1999 to 2012 (21.5% to 17.7%; APC: -1.60;  $p<0.001$ ) followed by an inflection point at 2012, resulting in an increase in prevalence from 2012 to 2018 that was not statistically significant (17.7% to 20.7%; APC: 3.15;  $p=0.2$ ).

“While our findings of an increasing trend over the last decade did not reach statistical significance, it could be an early warning that trends in vision impairment among those with diabetes are headed in the wrong direction,” said Elizabeth Lundeen, PhD, MPH, senior scientist in the Vision Health

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Initiative at CDC. “Additional research will help us better understand the causes of this recent upward trend and design effective interventions to prevent vision loss in individuals with diabetes around the country.”

The authors note that future research can help to confirm these trends and identify possible causes, such as changes in glycemic management, vision screening, and health care utilization. Better understanding these factors will aid in the design of sight-saving interventions.

## Research presentation details:

Dr. Elizabeth Lundeen and study investigators presented the findings in a poster presentation listed below:

- [Twenty-Year Trends in Vision Impairment among U.S. Adults with Diabetes](#)
- Presented on Saturday, June 4 at 11:30 a.m. CT

To increase awareness about diabetes and eye health, **Focus on Diabetes**<sup>™</sup>—a multi-year initiative that brings together the ADA and Visionary Partners, **VSP**<sup>®</sup> **Vision Care** and **Regeneron**—provides easy steps and valuable information and experiences to help people prevent diabetes-related eye disease and preserve eyesight.

During this year’s Scientific Sessions, Focus on Diabetes is encouraging people to attend an expert panel from the ADA and Taking Control of Your Diabetes (TCOYD). The discussion is titled “Eye Q: Increasing your understanding of diabetes and eye health,” and will be held on Sunday, June 5 at 2 p.m. CT.

For resources on how to manage one’s diabetes and eye health, visit [diabetes.org/eyehealth](https://diabetes.org/eyehealth) and follow along with us on social media at [@AmDiabetesAssn](#) on **Twitter**, **Facebook**, Spanish Facebook ([Asociación Americana de la Diabetes](#)) **Instagram**, and **LinkedIn**.

For more information, please contact the ADA Scientific Sessions media team onsite at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center from June 3–7 by phone at 504-670-4902, or by email at [SciSessionsPress@diabetes.org](mailto:SciSessionsPress@diabetes.org).

## About the ADA’s Scientific Sessions

The ADA’s 82<sup>nd</sup> Scientific Sessions, the world’s largest scientific meeting focused on diabetes research, prevention, and care, will be a hybrid event held June 3–7, 2022 at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans, LA. Leading physicians, scientists, and health care professionals from around the world will unveil cutting-edge research, treatment recommendations, and advances toward a cure for diabetes. We are eager to get back to safely participating in person and networking with colleagues while hearing the latest scientific advances and groundbreaking research

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presentations. Learn more and register at [scientificsessions.diabetes.org](https://scientificsessions.diabetes.org) and join the Scientific Sessions conversation on social media using #ADA2022.

## About the American Diabetes Association

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) is the nation's leading voluntary health organization fighting to bend the curve on the diabetes epidemic and help people living with diabetes thrive. For 81 years, the ADA has driven discovery and research to treat, manage, and prevent diabetes while working relentlessly for a cure. Through advocacy, program development, and education we aim to improve the quality of life for the over 133 million Americans living with diabetes or prediabetes. Diabetes has brought us together. What we do next will make us Connected for Life. To learn more or to get involved, visit us at [diabetes.org](https://diabetes.org) or call 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383). Join the fight with us on Facebook ([American Diabetes Association](https://www.facebook.com/AmericanDiabetesAssociation)), Spanish Facebook ([Asociación Americana de la Diabetes](https://www.facebook.com/AsociaciónAmericanaDeLaDiabetes)), LinkedIn ([American Diabetes Association](https://www.linkedin.com/company/american-diabetes-association)), Twitter ([@AmDiabetesAssn](https://twitter.com/AmDiabetesAssn)), and Instagram ([@AmDiabetesAssn](https://www.instagram.com/AmDiabetesAssn)).

## About VSP Vision

At VSP Vision, our purpose is to empower human potential through sight. As the first and only national not-for-profit vision benefits company, this is what drives everything we do. For more than 65 years, VSP has been the leader in health-focused vision care. Every day, the people who power our complementary businesses (VSP<sup>®</sup> Vision Care, Marchon<sup>®</sup> Eyewear, Inc., Visionworks<sup>®</sup>, Eyefinity<sup>®</sup>, Eyeconic<sup>®</sup>, VSP Optics, and VSP Ventures) work together to create a world where everyone can bring their best vision to life. That means providing affordable access to eye care and eyewear for more than 85 million members through a network of more than 41,000 doctors. And it means expanding access to vision care to those disadvantaged by income, distance, or disaster. Through VSP Eyes of Hope<sup>®</sup>, more than 3.6 million people in need have received no-cost eye care and eyewear. Learn more about how we're reinvesting in greater vision, health, and opportunities for all at [vspvision.com](https://vspvision.com).

## About Regeneron

Regeneron is a leading biotechnology company that invents, develops and commercializes life-transforming medicines for people with serious diseases. Founded and led for nearly 35 years by physician-scientists, our unique ability to repeatedly translate science into medicine has led to numerous FDA-approved treatments and candidates in development. Regeneron is accelerating and improving the traditional drug development process through our proprietary VelociSuite<sup>®</sup> technologies, and through research initiatives such as the Regeneron Genetics Center. Visit [Regeneron.com](https://Regeneron.com) to learn more.

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