



## U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Issues Draft Recommendation Statement on Screening for Impaired Visual Acuity in Older Adults

*Task Force concludes evidence on primary care screening is insufficient*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – July 21, 2015 – The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (Task Force) today posted a draft recommendation on screening for impaired visual acuity, or vision impairment, in adults 65 and older who have not reported problems with their vision. The Task Force found that the current evidence is insufficient to assess the balance of benefits and harms of screening older adults in a primary care setting for vision impairment if they have not reported any vision problems. This is an I statement and is not a recommendation for or against screening.

The Task Force is providing an opportunity for public comment on this draft recommendation statement and the companion draft evidence review until August 17. All comments will be considered as the Task Force develops its final recommendation and final evidence review.

### Grade in this recommendation:

- I: The balance of benefits and harms cannot be determined.

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Older age is an important risk factor for most types of vision impairment that affect independence and quality of life. Common causes of vision impairment are refractive errors (the reason most people wear glasses or contacts); cataracts, or the clouding of the eye's lens; and age-related macular degeneration (AMD), which distorts vision in the center of the eye.

In a primary care setting, clinicians typically check for eye conditions with an eye chart test. The Task Force found that while vision screening with an eye chart can identify people who have refractive errors, it does not accurately identify early-stage AMD or cataracts in people without symptoms of vision problems.

“We need more evidence on accurate ways to screen for eye conditions in older adults in a primary care setting and on the link between vision screening and quality of life,” said Al Siu, M.D., M.S.P.H., Chair of the Task Force.

The Task Force's draft recommendation statement has been posted for public comment on the Task Force Web site at [www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org](http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org). Comments can be submitted from July 21 to August 17 at <http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Name/us-preventive-services-task-force-opportunities-for-public-comment>.

The Task Force is an independent, volunteer panel of national experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine that works to improve the health of all Americans by making evidence-based recommendations about clinical preventive services such as screenings, counseling services, and preventive medications.

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