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Prevent Blindness Declares June as Cataract Awareness Month to Educate Public on Eye Disease that is the Leading Cause of Vision Loss in the United States

-- Prevent Blindness provides free cataract resources to patients and professionals including fact sheets, social media graphics, a dedicated web page and expert video --

CHICAGO (May 30, 2024) – [Prevent Blindness](#), the nation’s leading nonprofit eye health and safety organization, has declared June as Cataract Awareness Month to provide patients and professionals with free educational resources on cataract, a clouding of the eye’s lens. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), cataract is the leading cause of blindness worldwide and the leading cause of vision loss in the United States. Additionally, an estimated 20.5 million Americans aged 40 years and older have cataract in one or both eyes.

Prevent Blindness offers a variety of free informational resources in English and Spanish including fact sheets, social media graphics, and a listing of vision care financial assistance programs. The group also offers a dedicated web resource at [PreventBlindness.org/cataract](#), and the “[Understanding Cataract](#)” episode in the “Focus on Eye Health Expert Series,” featuring Albert Cheung, MD, Cataract, Cornea, Anterior Segment Specialist with Virginia Eye Consultants and Assistant Professor at Eastern Virginia Medical School, Department of Ophthalmology.

More than half of all Americans have cataracts by the time they are 80 years old. However, cataract can also sometimes be found in young people or even newborn babies (congenital). Risk factors for developing cataract include:

- Intense heat or long-term exposure to UV rays from the sun
- Certain diseases, such as diabetes
- Inflammation in the eye
- Hereditary influences
- Events before birth, such as German measles in the mother
- [Long-term steroid use](#) (medicines used to treat some health problems, like arthritis or allergies)
- Eye injuries
- Eye diseases, such as glaucoma
- Smoking

The [Cleveland Clinic](#) states that cataract surgery is one of the most common procedures, with surgeons performing more than 3 million cataract surgeries in the United States, and 20 million globally, improving vision for 97 percent of patients. For those who have had cataract surgery recommended by their eye doctors, Prevent Blindness offers the dedicated webpage, [PreventBlindness.org/cataract-surgery](#), and the printable “[Guide to Cataract Surgery](#).”

“As we age, we are more likely to develop cataract. The good news is that surgery is highly effective,” said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “Make sure to talk to your eye doctor about your risk for cataract and steps you can take to keep your eyes healthy and your vision clear.”

For free information on cataract or cataract surgery, please visit [PreventBlindness.org/cataract](#). For a listing of vision care financial assistance programs in English and Spanish, visit [PreventBlindness.org/vision-care-financial-assistance-information/](#).

About Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, visit us at [PreventBlindness.org](#), and follow us on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#), [Threads](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

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