

A Cup of Health with CDC

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[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

[Matthew Reynolds] Welcome to A Cup of Health with CDC, a weekly broadcast of the MMWR, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Matthew Reynolds

Most of us know that diabetes is a disorder involving blood sugar. But did you know that adults with diabetes are more likely to have vision problems?

A recent CDC study has shown that many adults with diabetes do not have adequate eyeglass or contact lens prescriptions. Nearly two-thirds of adults with diabetes who have distant vision problems could improve their vision with appropriate glasses or contact lenses.

Here to discuss that study is Dr. Xinzhi Zhang, of the CDC's Division of Diabetes Translation. Welcome to the show, Dr. Zhang.

[Dr. Zhang] Thank you, Matthew. It's good to be here.

[Matthew Reynolds] Dr. Zhang, what exactly is correctable vision impairment?

[Dr. Zhang] Correctable visual impairment is the visual impairment or poor vision that could be corrected by appropriate glasses, contact lenses, or surgery.

[Matthew Reynolds] How many adults with diabetes have vision problems that could be improved with appropriate correction?

[Dr. Zhang] About two thirds of people with diabetes who have vision problems can benefit from appropriate correction with glasses, contact lenses, or surgery.

[Matthew Reynolds] So why is it important to treat correctable visual impairment?

[Dr. Zhang] Good vision is important for safety and quality of life, especially among people with diabetes, to avoid falls, fractures, and other injuries. Correcting vision problems due to refractive errors is a simple and easy public health intervention.

[Matthew Reynolds] Well, what should people with diabetes do if they have vision impairment or vision problems?

[Dr. Zhang] People with diabetes are at higher risk of developing blindness and visual impairment due to diabetic retinopathy, a complication of diabetes. They also have increased risk of developing cataract and glaucoma. Because of that, it is recommended for those with diabetes to have a yearly dilated eye examination to detect

and manage these complications in a timely manner. Additionally, like people without diabetes, people with diabetes do have a high prevalence of vision problems that could be easily corrected by glasses, contact lenses, or surgery.

[Matthew Reynolds] Is there anything else you'd like the audience to know about correctable vision impairment?

[Dr. Zhang] It is simple and easy to correct vision problems due to refractive errors, by glasses, contact lenses, or surgery, if needed. In addition, let us not forget that people with diabetes should visit their eye care providers and follow the recommended yearly dilated eye examinations.

[Matthew Reynolds] Dr. Zhang, thanks for talking with us here today.

[Dr. Zhang] Thank you.

[Matthew Reynolds] Well that's it for this week's show. Don't forget to join us next week. Until then, be well. This is Matthew Reynolds for A Cup of Health With CDC.

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