

‘Alcon More to See’ survey released by Alcon

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Division of Novartis and global leader in eye care, Alcon has released the ‘Alcon More to See’ survey that highlights the critical gaps in the knowledge and awareness of cataracts across six Asian countries, including India.

Despite cataracts being a leading cause of vision impairment in the above 60+ age-groups in India and other parts of Asia, senior citizens surveyed revealed high levels of ignorance or incorrect beliefs with regards to cataracts and their progression.

According to the survey, “The knowledge that age-related cataracts are a progressive disease, a part of aging and can lead to visual impairment and blindness unless treated was missing. In fact, when it comes to eye check-ups, many senior citizens revealed that they do not regularly consult with an eye care professional. This, even when over 96 percent Indians in this age-group revealed that when compared to touch, taste, scent and hearing, vision is the most important of the five senses.”

“The majority of senior citizens, 77% understand that cloudy vision is a symptom of cataract. Yet almost half (42%) of the Indian respondents were unable to name even one symptom. Plus, 16% erroneously listed itchy eyes as a symptom”, survey says

Sandeep Bothra, Country Business Head – Surgical said, “While lifestyle factors may impact cataract, it’s a progressive disease that can only be treated by surgery. Alcon is encouraging people 50 years and up to get their eyes checked annually. Annual check-ups are very important for seniors and it worries us that so few are regularly seeing an eye care professional.”

Interestingly, when compared to their Asian peers, Indian respondents showed significantly higher levels of awareness when it came to having a full understanding of cataract (37%) compared to an average of 22% across the rest of the Asia region. The number of respondents with ‘no knowledge at all’ on cataract was considerably lower in India, at 3% compared to 7% for the Asia region.