

Association of Physical Activity and Visual Impairment in Older Adults

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BACKGROUND: Visual impairment directly and indirectly affects the health of the elderly. The World Health Organization identifies visual loss as one of the major reasons for disability in the elderly. It has been suggested that lifestyle factors such as physical activity, health status and diet are associated with visual function.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this study was to investigate possible associations between self-report measures of physical activity level, health status, and visual function in community-dwelling older adults who attend an Eye Clinic for their eye care.

METHODS: A cross-sectional study and in-clinic interviews assessed demographic, visual and health information from 100 community-dwelling older adults, aged ≥ 55 (M=68, SD=8.0).

RESULTS: Eye disease history was significantly correlated with self-reported measure of physical activity levels ($r = .29$, $p = .00$) and social history was significantly correlated with diet ($r = .23$, $p = .02$).

CONCLUSIONS: The findings of this study may provide knowledge to identify and develop health promotion interventions in the eye clinic for older persons who are at risk for developing chronic diseases and disability.