



Vision Ranked as Most Important Sense Among Canadians, Survey Finds

Overwhelming majority — 83% of respondents — prefer never to lose their eyesight over all other senses, according to new national poll celebrating Vision Health Month

Calgary, ALBERTA (May 2, 2023) – When it comes to the five senses, Canadians place the highest value on their vision, but almost half are still forgoing their regular eye exams, according to the findings of a new national survey commissioned by FYidoctors and conducted by Maru Public Opinion. The survey, released as part of an awareness campaign for Vision Health Month in May, asked questions running the gamut on eye health, with fresh new findings on a range of eye-related topics, including what’s keeping Canadians from visiting their optometrists, screen time habits, as well as what their organ donation plans likely won’t include.

According to the survey findings, vision ranks as the most important sense Canadians say they would never want to lose entirely. Eighty-three percent of respondents ranked their eyesight at the top, followed by hearing (8%); taste (4%); touch (3%); and smell (2%). Despite the overwhelming votes for vision, however, a significant crowd of Canadians (42%), admit they ‘rarely’ or ‘never’ seek out their optometrist to get their eyes examined, while the rest (58%), make the appointment at least once every two years.

“With May being Vision Health Month, it’s an important reminder for Canadians to book their book their regular eye exam,” says Dr. Alan Ulsifer, Chair and CEO of FYidoctors, Canada’s leading diversified healthcare organization. “The results of this survey point clearly to the fact that Canadians place high value on their eye health, but not enough are taking the proper steps to maintaining it.”

The survey also found reasons cited for not booking an eye exam include self-diagnosed lack of need, general procrastination or lack of time and not enough insurance coverage. One in ten Canadians, typically those aged 18-34, admit to never getting their eyes checked, while a third (33%) of respondents say they visit their O.D. only occasionally every few years. Those least likely to book a visit live in the Prairies (51%), followed by Quebec (46%); BC (43%); Ontario (41%), Atlantic Canada (40%); and Alberta (35%).

Additionally, the survey the also found that:

Screen-time is a still a long time: Almost 7 in 10 Canadians are eyeing their screens for six or more hours a day. One in 5 are watching a screen 10-15+ hours a day. That equals **3,650 hours or 152 days each year.**

- Those Canadians most likely to be scanning their screens for 10+ hours a day (21%), they are most likely to be the youngest (18-34; 33%), followed by their middle aged (35-54; 24%) and oldest (55+; 11%), and are more likely to be women (23%) than men (19%).
- By region, the top screen watchers can be found in: Manitoba / Saskatchewan / Ontario (24%); Alberta (21%), Quebec (20%), British Columbia (19%), and Atlantic Canada (15%)

Optics Intact: Of the following body parts: Eyes, Heart, Lungs, Liver, Kidneys they would not want to donate when they pass, Canadians ranked Eyes at the top spot. Ranked in order: Eyes (35%); Heart (22%); Lungs (12%); Liver (9%); and Kidneys (8%). Gen X ranked eyes #1 at a higher rate than any other generation not wanting to donate them, followed by Millennials (37%); Boomers (32%); and Gen Z (28%).

On a No-name basis: A significant group of Canadians surveyed (43%) admit not even knowing their optometrist's name (those who do, are most likely to be the eldest Canadians, ages 55+)

Sight-Specific Driving: Almost 3 in 10 drivers (27%) who require prescription glasses behind the wheel say they don't always wear them.

“Whether it's providing advice about how blue light affects their eyes when viewing screens, or the fact that eye exams can help detect other diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, or even brain tumours, it's important to take that time with your optometrist,” says Dr. Ulsifer. “The best way to stay on top of eye health is booking a comprehensive exam appointment — we think Canadians should all agree on that.”

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About FYidoctors:

FYidoctors is Canada's leading diversified healthcare organization. Doctor-led, professionally managed, and patient-focused, the organization concentrates on delivering outstanding eye care with patient-centric products and services. Recognized as one of Canada's Best Managed Companies in 2020, 2021 & 2022, the organization operates over 380 locations across the country. Rooted in a mission to enhance life, FYidoctors supports a wide array of philanthropic causes and initiatives. Through numerous community-centric programs and the Enhancing Life Foundation, FYidoctors enhances the lives of Canadians both inside and outside its clinic doors. For more information, please visit www.fyidoctors.com.

Survey Methodology:

These are some of the findings released by [Maru Public Opinion](#) from a survey undertaken between April 12-14, 2023, by the sample and data management experts at Maru/Blue. The survey was of 2,615 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Maru Voice Canada online panelists. For comparison purposes, a probability sample of this size has an estimated margin of error (which measures sampling variability) of +/- 1.9%, 19 times out of 20. The results have been weighted by education, region, age, and gender and language for Quebec to match the population according to Census data which ensures the sample is representative of the entire Canadian adult population. Discrepancies in or between totals when compared to the data tables are due to rounding.