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PUBLICATION:	Egyptian Gazette
DATE:	02-April-2017
COUNTRY:	Egypt
CIRCULATION:	60,000
TITLE :	Getting eyes checked essential, yet many unaware
PAGE:	05
ARTICLE TYPE:	Agency-Generated News
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AVE:	22,320

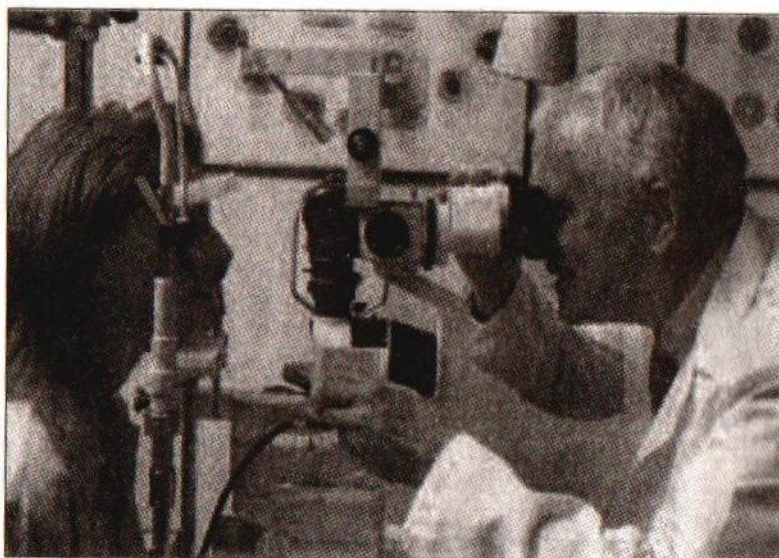
Getting eyes checked essential, yet many unaware

ON the occasion of the recently-celebration of World Glaucoma Week, the results of a survey conducted by a global pharmaceutical company showed that the majority of those surveyed are unfamiliar with glaucoma.

For those who may not know, Glaucoma is one of the main causes of blindness, and affects nearly 60 million people around the world. It is often undetected because it is a nearly symptomless eye disease that worsens slowly over time. The survey also showed that 87 per cent of respondents believe regular eye exams are important, but only 33 per cent reported having one annually.

Basyouni Abouseif, a representative of the pharmaceutical company that conducted the survey, stated: "(Our company) wants to raise awareness about the importance of regular eye exams by an ophthalmologist. Early diagnosis and treatment is essential, but many people are not aware that they may face the risk of glaucoma and potential blindness."

He added that the results of the survey support recommendations from scientific experts and patient organisations showing there is a significant gap between awareness of the disease, its potential impact and the relatively low



A REGULAR eye exam by an ophthalmologist is necessary to avoid glaucoma .

individual acceptance of regular screening. Abouseif warned the global burden of glaucoma is predicted to increase, with the number of people living with the disease worldwide rising to an estimated 76 million by 2020. Additional key findings from the survey show that 85 per cent of respondents stated that of the five senses, they would be most afraid of losing their eyesight.

The primary reasons for respondents not having a recent eye exam were: 21

per cent cited a lack of money or insurance; 19 per cent cited the belief that they "don't have any eye problems"; and 17 per cent cited their belief that a yearly exam is not necessary.

The pharmaceutical company also marked the celebration of World Glaucoma Week by sponsoring a charity-run event to raise awareness about the disease, in collaboration with the Egyptian Society for Glaucoma and Zamalek Runners on March 10 in the upscale district of Zamalek, in Cairo.