

The Diverging Risks of Exposure to Trachoma

Over the course of their lives, women spend more time with children than men. Since young children are the reservoirs of trachoma infection, contact with them can result in more frequent trachoma infection. This gender-specific exposure to trachoma risk factors places women at a higher risk for trachoma infections and subsequent blindness. Although both men and women can develop trichiasis, the odds of trichiasis are greater among women than men.

Young girl, 5 years old

In constant contact with other children. Starts to look after younger siblings.



Young mother, 20 years old

Early marriage and pregnancy restrict independence and mobility.



Older mother, 30 years old

Frequent contact with children and flies at home increase risk. Many women have trichiasis.



Elderly woman, 60 years old

Trichiasis common among elderly women causing economic and social isolation.



CHILD

FEMALE

LIFESPAN

ADULT

MORE RISK

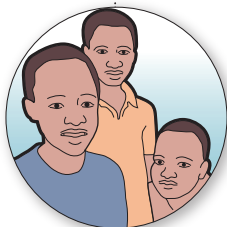
DIVERGING RISKS OF EXPOSURE

LESS RISK

MALE

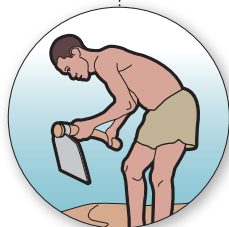
LIFESPAN

ADULT



Young boy, 5 years old

Young children pass trachoma through direct contact, need older family members to clean faces.



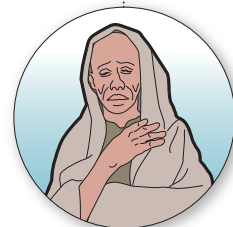
Young man, 20 years old

Begins to establish own household, often traveling to find work. Reduced chance of exposure to trachoma.



Older man, 30 years old

Married with own family, works outside home. Trichiasis uncommon.



Elderly man, 60 years old

Men are less likely than women to have trachoma. Some men are still disabled by trichiasis.