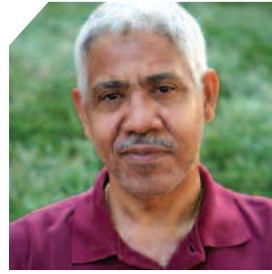


HealthyActions

Achieving Your Goals for Healthy Living



Stay Healthy: Testing for Glaucoma

Glaucoma is an eye disease in which the normal fluid inside the eyes slowly rises. This increase in pressure may damage a part of the eye called the optic nerve. The optic nerve carries messages to the brain.¹

Early Testing Can Save Vision

Glaucoma (glok-O-muh) damages the eye. It can lead to loss of vision or blindness. Having glaucoma can make simple tasks hard. Save your sight by finding and treating glaucoma early. Ask your doctor about an eye exam. Find out if you have glaucoma or are at risk for it.

Who's at Risk¹:

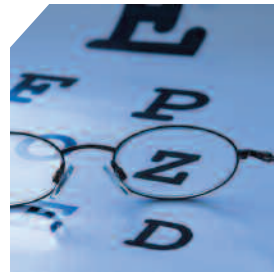
- African-Americans over age 40
- Anyone over 60, especially Mexican-Americans
- People with a family history of glaucoma

How Do I Know If I Have Glaucoma?

In the early stages of glaucoma there are often no symptoms. Over time you may start to have symptoms such as^{2, 3}:

- Side-vision loss
- Blurry vision
- Severe eye pain
- Rainbow-colored halos around lights

The best way to keep your vision from getting worse is to have regular exams from your eye doctor.



Stay Healthy: Testing for Glaucoma

How Will Your Eye Doctor Test for Glaucoma?

Your eye doctor will test to screen for glaucoma. The best known test is the “air puff test.” The doctor will also put eye drops in your eyes. These eye drops enlarge your pupils so the doctor can see inside your eye to check for glaucoma.

Living With Glaucoma

There is no cure for glaucoma. But people with the disease can live full lives. If you are diagnosed with glaucoma, there are ways to help prevent problems:

- Use the glaucoma medicines as your doctor tells you.
- Make sure your doctors are aware of every medicine or over-the-counter drug you are taking.
- Carry a glaucoma card or medic-alert bracelet. It will identify you as having glaucoma.

Eye Exams: How Often?

You should get a full eye exam every two years if you:

- Are 65 or older²

Everyone should get a full eye exam every one to two years, especially if you^{2,3,4}:

- Are African-American, Latino, or Asian
- Are farsighted (have trouble seeing close objects) or nearsighted (have trouble seeing objects that are far away)
- Have had glaucoma in one eye or a past eye injury
- Have diabetes
- Are taking steroids such as prednisone
- Have a family history of glaucoma

Glaucoma is a leading cause of blindness in the U.S. Getting treated early can help prevent loss of vision.¹ If you are told you have glaucoma, your eye doctor might prescribe eye drops or pills. Or you might need to have surgery. Using medicine or eye drops can't reverse damage that has already occurred. But it can prevent losing more of your vision.

References

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