

what you should know about
glaucoma



Lions **Eye Health** Program
Empowering communities to save sight.

Can glaucoma be prevented?

No, and sight lost to glaucoma can't be restored. But glaucoma can be treated. Medications and surgery can help save remaining vision.

What can you do to protect your vision?

Studies have shown that the early detection and treatment of glaucoma, before it causes major vision loss, is the best way to control the disease. So, if you fall into one of the high-risk groups for the disease, make sure to have a dilated eye exam every two years by an eye care professional.

Medicare covers an annual dilated eye exam for all people at high risk for glaucoma.

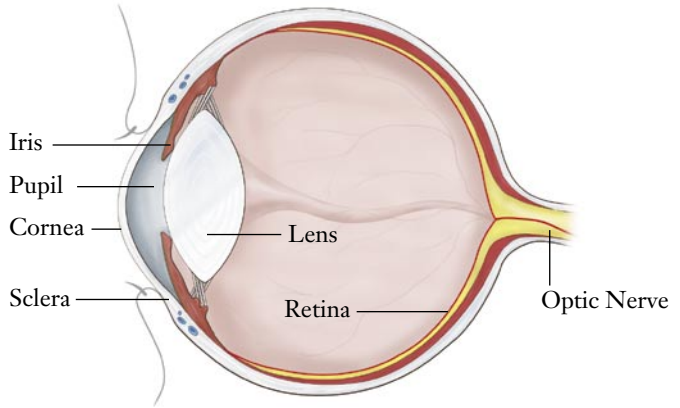
What if some vision has already been lost?

Even if glaucoma has already caused some vision loss there are resources available to help make the most of remaining vision. These services are available from a low vision specialist. Low vision is a term used to describe visual impairment that can't be corrected with standard glasses, contact lenses, medicine or surgery and that interferes with a person's ability to perform everyday tasks. A low vision specialist performs an evaluation and can prescribe devices and teach strategies that help a person maintain their independence.

**Now that you know,
don't lose sight of glaucoma.**

To learn more about glaucoma visit: www.LEHP.org or the National Eye Institute at www.nei.nih.gov. You can also write the National Eye Health Education Program at, 2020 Vision Place, Bethesda, MD 20892-3655

The anatomy of the eye



Who is at risk?

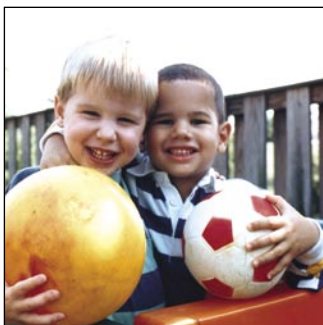
Nearly 3 million people have glaucoma, a leading cause of blindness in the United States. Although anyone can get glaucoma, some people are at higher risk. They include:

- African-Americans over age 40. Glaucoma is the leading cause of blindness among African-Americans. It is six to eight times more likely to occur among African-Americans than among Caucasians.
- Hispanics over the age of 65. Glaucoma is the second leading cause of vision loss and the leading cause of blindness among Hispanics.
- Everyone over age 60.
- People with a family history of glaucoma.

What are the symptoms?

At first, there are no symptoms. Vision stays normal, and there is no pain.

However, as the disease progresses, a person with glaucoma may notice their peripheral or side vision gradually failing. That is, objects in front may still be seen clearly, but objects to the side may be missed. As the disease worsens, the field of vision narrows and vision loss can result.



Normal Vision



Glaucoma

How is it detected?

There is no test for glaucoma that is 100% accurate. Only a complete eye exam through dilated pupils can positively identify glaucoma. This allows the eye care professional to get a good look at the inside of the eye to check for damage caused by glaucoma.

Can glaucoma be treated?

Yes. Although open-angle glaucoma can't be cured, it can usually be controlled. It's most commonly treated with medications, laser and conventional surgery.

If you have glaucoma, ask your doctor about the different treatments and which treatment may be better for your particular condition.

What is glaucoma?

Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases that damage the optic nerve, a group of nerve cells at the back of the eye. These nerves send visual information to the brain. When these nerves are damaged, vision loss may result. Glaucoma used to be defined as an increase of pressure inside the eye, but research shows that damage can occur even when pressure is in a normal range.

Because glaucoma develops gradually and painlessly a person could have the disease for many years and not have any symptoms, even while damage occurs. For this reason glaucoma is sometimes referred to as the “sneak thief of sight.”

The exact cause of primary open-angle glaucoma, the most common form of the disease, is uncertain.



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For more information, visit:
www.lehp.org

or call:

1.800.982.0356

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