



Let's

raise

GLAUCOMA

awareness

together

**It's World
#GlaucomaWeek**



- Over 78 million people have Glaucoma
Most are undetected until late hence
- the term: "SILENT THIEF OF SIGHT"
(Vision loss is irreversible by the way)
- This is why EARLY DETECTION and
treatment is very important!

**GET TESTED
BOOK YOUR EYE TEST SOON!**

Stages of Glaucoma



Normal



Moderate



End Stage

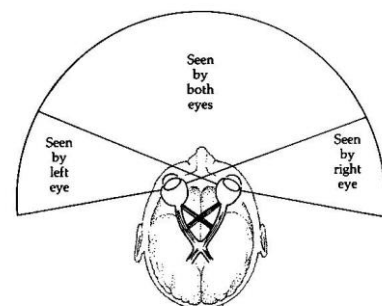
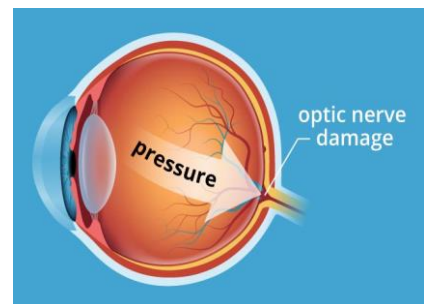
Of the five senses, the one that people are most afraid of losing is their sight. Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of irreversible blindness in the world. The good news is that vision loss is preventable with early detection, treatment, and management.

What is Glaucoma?

It is a condition where the optic nerve is damaged due to fluid & pressure build up or compromised blood flow.

This results in a loss in the Visual Field (meaning how you see straight ahead and peripherally). The Visual Field from your Right Eye crosses over to your Left Eye so even when “blind spots” (scotomas) develop, you may not notice them because your brain compensates.

People can have glaucoma for years and have no symptoms at all which is why it is often called the “silent thief in the night” -there is no pain, redness, or loss in (central) visual acuity. End stage glaucoma can be reduced to “tunnel vision” which is when many people notice and THEN have an eye exam. Unfortunately, Visual Field loss is permanent.



Other causes of glaucoma can be secondary to:

- Infection, trauma, or surgery
- Prolonged use of topical corticosteroids

Risk factors

- Family history of glaucoma
- Being > 40 years
- Narrow anterior chamber angles. Fluid inside your eye (called aqueous humour), usually flows through a mesh-like channel. If this channel gets blocked the pressure in the eye builds up.
- Thin corneas
- High hyperopia
- Diabetes

How can I prevent glaucoma from developing?

You cannot prevent it, but early detection means that the optic nerve health can be preserved as much as possible and that Visual Field loss need not occur. Fig 4 (normal optic nerve) and Fig 5 (Glaucomatous optic nerve)



Normal Healthy Optic Nerve



Glaucomatous Optic Nerve

Diagnosis of Glaucoma - What tests should I expect?

There are four tests used to make a diagnosis:

1. Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT). Light waves are used to take quick and detailed cross-sectional images of the optic nerve which allows for a much earlier diagnosis and management. It also allows for accurate trend analysis of the nerve from year to year
2. Visual Fields. This test checks the sensitivity of both the central and peripheral field of view. vision.
3. Intra Ocular Pressures (IOP's) which measures the pressure within the eye (unrelated to blood pressure)
4. Pachymetry. This measures the thickness of the cornea (the front surface of the eyes) which bears relevance to the eye pressures.

Long term management

The aim and choice of treatment is to keep things from progressing and depends on the stage of glaucoma. Any loss in the Visual Field before diagnosis is irreversible. Treatment is needed long-term.

➤ **Eyedrops.** These work to low eye pressure by:

- a. Reducing the creation of fluid in your eye or
- b. Increase its outflow thereby lowering eye pressure.

Side effects include allergies, redness, stinging, blurred vision, and irritated eyes

Drops are very effective in early glaucoma.

- **Laser surgery**- Iridotomy or trabeculoplasty to open the existing channels
- **Microsurgery**- Trabeculectomy: a new drainage channel is created.

Take care of your eyes. Vision loss due to glaucoma is **preventable** with regular eye exams. Even if you are seeing well it is so important to have the health of your eyes checked annually. Schedule your eye exam.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR





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