

Patient Information about Glaucoma

<http://vision.healthcommunities.com/patient-information-glaucoma/index.shtml>

The term “glaucoma” is used to describe a variety of conditions that lead to gradual, permanent vision loss. Glaucoma occurs as a result of optic nerve damage when too much fluid builds up and causes pressure in the eye. Glaucoma is the leading cause for preventable blindness.

There are several types of glaucoma. The most common type is called open angle glaucoma. In some cases, vision problems caused by glaucoma are hereditary (genetic).

Here are some questions to ask your eye care specialist (ophthalmologist, optometrist) about glaucoma. **Print this page**, mark the questions you would like to have answered, and bring it with you to your next appointment. The more you know about glaucoma, the better you will be able to make informed decisions about glaucoma prevention and treatment.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Glaucoma

- Why do you suspect that I have glaucoma?
- What do you suspect is the underlying cause for my glaucoma?
- Do you recommend that I go to an eye care specialist? Why or why not?
- How will my condition be diagnosed?
- What do these tests involve?
- How should I prepare for these glaucoma tests?
- Should I call for the results or will someone contact me?
Telephone number to call:
- Is my vision loss related to another medical condition or to a genetic eye problem?
- What factors might have increased my risk for developing glaucoma?
- Do my children or other family members have an increased risk for glaucoma or other types of vision loss?
- Can glaucoma be prevented?
- What are the most common signs and symptoms of glaucoma?
- What should I do if my vision loss worsens or I experience new symptoms?

Telephone number to call:

- Which glaucoma treatment do you recommend?
- What are the benefits, risks, and possible complications of this treatment?
- If this treatment does not work and my condition worsens, what other types of treatment are available?
- If medications will be prescribed to treat my glaucoma, what are the potential side effects of these medicines?
- What does surgery to treat glaucoma involve?
- What are the risks of glaucoma surgery?
- If left untreated, what are the possible consequences of glaucoma?
- Are there any effective alternative treatments in addition to medications and surgery?
- Are there any experimental glaucoma treatments that may be helpful?
- Do you recommend that I participate in a clinical trial for people who have glaucoma? Why or why not?
- Can you recommend resources for support or additional glaucoma information?
- How will my vision be monitored?
- How often will I have follow-up appointments?
- Next appointment:**
Doctor: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Notes/Additional Information