

Glaucoma

More than 2.2 million Americans age 40 and older have glaucoma. Half again that many may be unaware they have this potentially blinding disease because they have no symptoms.

Glaucoma is a condition in which the optic nerve is damaged. The optic nerve is the part of the eye that carries the images we see to the brain. Damage to the nerve is usually associated with elevated pressure inside the eye (called intraocular pressure). However, other factors can be involved and can lead to vision loss.

The exact cause of primary open-angle glaucoma, the most common form of the disease, is uncertain. Some of the other forms of glaucoma may occur along with other abnormalities of the eye.

There are usually no symptoms at first, but as the disease progresses, a person with glaucoma may notice his or her vision gradually failing with:

- Blurred vision
- Loss of peripheral vision
- Difficulty focusing on objects
- Presence of halos around lights

Anyone can develop glaucoma. Those who are at higher risk and should have an eye exam at least every one to two years include:

- African Americans over age 40
- Everyone over age 60
- People with a family history of glaucoma
- Individuals that have experienced a serious eye injury
- People with other health conditions, such as diabetes (exam every year)

Although glaucoma cannot be cured, early detection and treatment can usually preserve vision. An Eye M.D. can help control glaucoma by lowering intraocular pressure with eye drops, laser treatments or surgery. However, vision loss due to glaucoma cannot be restored and, if left untreated, glaucoma can lead to blindness.

See your Eye M.D. ... because there's so much more to see.

An Eye M.D. is an ophthalmologist - a medical doctor who provides the full spectrum of eye and vision care. From eyeglasses and contact lenses to medication and surgery, your Eye M.D. will help you keep your sight for life.

*Glaucoma
is the
second most
common
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blindness
in the United
States*

For more information or
to find an Eye M.D., visit
www.aao.org