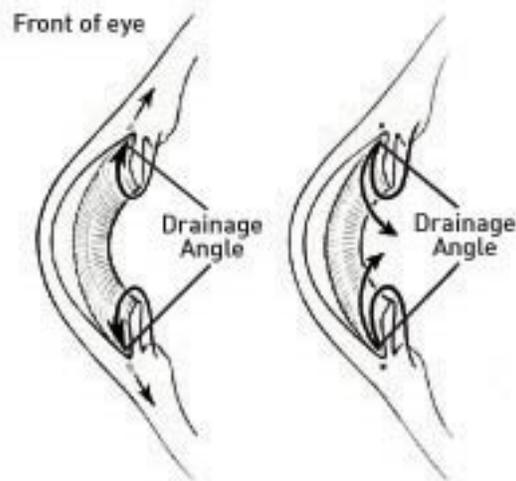


What is Glaucoma? It is a condition in which increased fluid pressure inside the eye causes damage to the optic nerve, resulting in partial vision loss or blindness. There are four types of glaucoma: closed-angle (acute), open-angle (chronic), secondary, and congenital. Glaucoma is the third most common cause of blindness in the U.S.

What Causes Glaucoma? Fluid pressure increases in the eye when the eye's fluid (called aqueous humor) does not drain properly. This pressure reduces the blood supply to the optic nerve and causes the death of nerve cells. As these cells die, blind spots develop. Without treatment, glaucoma can eventually lead to blindness. Closed-angle (acute) glaucoma occurs when the iris slips forward and closes off the exit of the aqueous

humor. This type is more common amongst farsighted people. Open-angle (chronic) glaucoma is the most common type of glaucoma. It occurs when the fluid channels in the wall of the eye gradually narrow with time. Secondary glaucoma is caused by other diseases or drugs. Congenital glaucoma is present at birth and occurs as a result of a defect in the development of the eye's fluid channels.



What are the Symptoms of Glaucoma?

- Blurred Vision
- Headache
- Seeing Halos Around Lights
- Severe Eye Pain
- Nausea/Vomiting

How is Glaucoma Detected? Regular eye examinations by your ophthalmologist are the best way to detect glaucoma. Your ophthalmologist will measure your intraocular pressure, inspect the drainage angle of your eye, evaluate whether there is any optic nerve damage, and test the peripheral vision of each eye.

Who is Most at Risk? African-Americans over age 40, everyone over age 60 (especially Mexican-Americans), and people with a family history of glaucoma.

How is Glaucoma Treated? Damage caused by glaucoma usually cannot be reversed. Eye drops, laser surgery, and operating room surgery can be used to help prevent further damage. Oral medication may also be prescribed.

How can Glaucoma Be Prevented? There is no real prevention for glaucoma. Early detection, however, may prevent further vision loss and blindness. Anyone older than 35 should have an eye examination at least every 2 years.

This document is provided for informational purposes only. Please consult an eye care professional about symptoms that may require medical attention and may or may not be covered by your medical plan and/or routine vision plan.