

## GLAUCOMA

Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases that cause damage to the optic nerve, gradually causing “tunnel vision.” Glaucoma occurs when the internal pressure in the eyes increases enough to damage the nerve fibers in the optic nerve and causes vision loss. Glaucoma usually develops without pain or symptoms. While glaucoma cannot be prevented, it can be controlled to prevent or slow continued vision loss. At least half of the people who have glaucoma don’t know they have it. Left undetected and untreated, glaucoma can lead to permanent vision loss.

### Symptoms:

- Varies depending on type of glaucoma
- Primary open-angle glaucoma often develops slowly and painlessly so it can gradually destroy vision without any warning signs
- Acute angle-closure glaucoma occurs from a sudden blockage of drainage channels, causing rapid pressure build up, and is accompanied by:
  - Blurred vision
  - Appearance of colored rings around lights (halos)
  - Pain or redness in the eyes

**Diagnosis:** A comprehensive dilated eye exam includes a simple, painless procedure called tonometry, which measures the internal pressure of the eye. In addition, Pachymetry measures corneal thickness to help confirm eye pressure accuracy. A visual field assessment further measures the degree and sensitivity of retinal function. New technologies that can help assess glaucoma-related changes in the optic nerve and retina can also assist optometrists in the diagnosis and management of the disease.

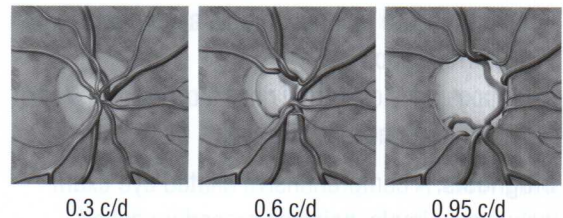
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An examination of the optic nerve allows the doctor of optometry to assess the potential for the development of glaucoma.

**Treatment:** Prescription eye drops are the most common first line of treatment. These must be taken regularly. In some cases, laser therapy or surgery may be necessary. Treatment regimens are designed to prevent loss of vision. Unfortunately, any vision loss as a result of glaucoma is usually permanent and cannot be restored. In some cases, low vision rehabilitation services, which include the use of specialized optical devices and training, may benefit people with severe vision loss. Early detection and treatment are paramount. Glaucoma can be controlled, which reduces the chances of permanent vision loss.

### Optic Nerve Head Cupping Progression



0.3 c/d

0.6 c/d

0.95 c/d

