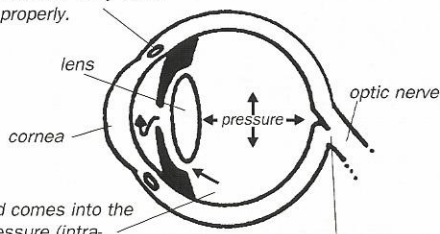


GLAUCOMA

Glaucoma is an eye disease caused when the pressure in the eyeball rises due to a build up of fluid.

The build up occurs when the canals which normally drain the fluid away don't work properly.



As new fluid comes into the eye, the pressure (intra-ocular pressure) rises.

When the pressure stays high over a period of time, this damages blood vessels and nerves at the back of the eye. The longer the pressure stays high, the worse the effect on eyesight.

Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness in people over 40 years of age. However, almost one in ten people with glaucoma are diagnosed at a younger age. Almost all blindness caused by glaucoma can be prevented if the glaucoma is discovered early enough. Glaucoma can't be cured, but in most cases it responds well to the right treatment.

AT RISK

You have more risk of getting glaucoma if you are over 35 years old, and:

- have relatives with glaucoma
- have diabetes
- are short-sighted
- get migraines

Chronic Open-Angle Glaucoma

- the most common type of glaucoma
- usually has are few symptoms and can go unnoticed for months or years
- occurs when the pressure rises slowly because the canals that drain the fluid away don't work properly
- causes a gradual loss of sight

- is usually treated with eyedrops and/or tablets which must be used every day as your doctor advises
- if medicines don't work you may require eye surgery
- laser treatment of the eye may be used

Acute Angle-Closure Glaucoma

- much less common than open-angle glaucoma
- occurs when the drainage canal becomes completely blocked without warning
- normally affects only one eye at a time
- causes severe pain, blurred sight, coloured rings around lights, nausea and even vomiting
- can cause blindness if not treated straight away
- needs surgery or laser treatment urgently

Secondary Glaucoma

- is caused by other conditions such as injuries or inflammation

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Most people have no symptoms - changes in sight are gradual and may not be noticed. These changes can include:

- the need to change glasses often
- finding it hard to see in dark rooms
- loss of side vision
- blurred sight.

Rarely people may:

- see coloured rings around lights
- have pain and severe headaches.

The earlier glaucoma is discovered and treated, the greater the chance of keeping your sight.

TESTS

There are ways to check if you have glaucoma.

- Your eye specialist can measure the fluid pressure in your eye.
- Your eye specialist and/or doctor can check the nerves and blood vessels in your eye for damage.
- Your field of vision can be tested for blind spots or sight loss.

SELF CARE

- Have your eyes checked every 2 years or as often as your eye specialist advises you.
- Understand the glaucoma medicines you use and how they work (ask your pharmacist and doctor).
- Using your glaucoma medicines every day as your doctor advises is important.
- Tell all new doctors or health professionals what medicines you are using for glaucoma.
- Have an extra supply of medicines on hand, at work and if you plan to be away from home for a few days.
- Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before using other medicines, eyedrops or eyewashes.
- Carry an identification card (available from the Glaucoma Foundation).

Eyedrops for glaucoma:

- work by reducing the amount of fluid in the eye or opening the drainage canal
- can cause red eyes, stinging, and sometimes headaches
- are sometimes used together with oral medicines
- can affect other parts of the body (ask your pharmacist or doctor)
- write the date on the bottle when you open it, and throw out the drops after 28 days.

My glaucoma medicines:

Using eyedrops

1. Wash hands thoroughly.
2. Tilt head back.
3. Pull down lower lid.
4. Look up and drop in one drop. Don't let the container touch the eye.
5. Close eye gently.
6. With the end of finger, put gentle pressure over the inner corner of the eye (tear duct), near your nose. Hold for a few minutes.
7. Instil second drop if prescribed (wait about 3-4 minutes after the first drop to avoid washing it out of the eye).

Contact:

Your doctor - listed under Medical Practitioners in the yellow pages of the phone book

The Glaucoma Foundation Inc. of Australia

PO Box 420
Crows Nest NSW 1585

My eye specialist:

Your Self Care pharmacist. To find:

ACT	(02) 6283 4703	NSW	(02) 9437 5941
TAS	(03) 6231 2636	VIC	(03) 9903 9600
QLD	(07) 3844 4900	WA	(08) 9388 2886
SA	(08) 8272 1211		

In case of poisoning, phone the **Poisons Information Centre** on 131 126 from anywhere in Australia.

Pharmacists are medicines experts. Ask your pharmacist for advice when choosing a medicine.

Your **Self Care** pharmacist



KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN
DAVID S. NOLTE PHARMACY

David S. Nolte, B.Pharm., M.P.S.
701-703 RATHDOWNE ST., NTH CARLTON
Telephone 9349 1522 - Fax 9349 1115

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