Who May Be At Higher Risk?

Anyone can develop glaucoma, but certain factors increase the likelihood.

1. **Family history**
   A parent or sibling with glaucoma
2. **Age 50+**
   Risk generally rises with age
3. **Higher eye pressure**
   An important risk factor
4. **Diabetes or myopia**
   Other health and vision factors
5. **Past eye injury**
   Or previous eye surgery
6. **Steroid use**
   Long-term use of some medicines

Having a close family member with glaucoma can increase your risk up to tenfold, but doesn't necessarily mean more severe disease.

An Eye Check Can Make A Difference

Many people with glaucoma notice no early symptoms. An optometrist or ophthalmologist can assess your risk and advise when you should be checked.



When to seek urgent help

Sudden severe eye pain, blurred vision, headache, nausea, vomiting or halos around lights may need emergency medical assessment.

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SCAN FOR INFO



A Guide To Glaucoma

Understanding risk, eye checks and treatment.

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What Is Glaucoma?

Glaucoma is a group of eye conditions that damage the optic nerve, which sends visual information from the eye to the brain.

How does glaucoma affect vision?

Glaucoma often develops gradually, with no noticeable symptoms in its early stages. It can affect peripheral (side) vision first, meaning changes may go unnoticed until significant damage has occurred.

Vision loss caused by glaucoma cannot be reversed, making early detection and regular eye examinations important.

Common types of glaucoma

Open-angle glaucoma

Often develops slowly and without noticeable early symptoms. Side vision may be affected first.

Angle-closure glaucoma

Occurs when the eye's drainage angle narrows or closes. Sudden attacks require urgent care.

1 in 8 people have glaucoma by age 80. The likelihood of developing glaucome increases with age.

How Glaucoma Is Detected

There is no reliable way to identify glaucoma from symptoms alone. Your eye care professional combines several tests:

1. **Measure eye pressure**
   A pressure check helps assess risk.
2. **Examine the optic nerve**
   Look for signs of damage.
3. **Test peripheral vision**
   Check for changes in side vision.
4. **Take eye images**
   Measure or photograph the optic nerve.
5. **Additional measurements**
   Such as corneal thickness or drainage angle.

50% of Australians living with glaucoma may be unaware they have it.

Treatment & Ongoing Care

Treatment aims to protect the optic nerve and reduce the risk of further vision loss. Your plan depends on your eye assessment.

Prescription eye drops

May lower eye pressure by reducing fluid production or helping drainage.

Laser treatment

Can improve fluid drainage for some forms of glaucoma.

Surgery

May be considered when other treatment is not sufficient or appropriate.

Keep your follow-up appointments.

Lost vision generally cannot be restored. Ongoing care helps protect remaining sight.

The median wait for cataract surgery in public hospitals was 106 days.