

For more information about glaucoma,
visit the Healthy Vision 2010 Website at
www.healthylvision2010.org.

Glaucoma Has No Warning Signs

What is glaucoma?

Glaucoma is a group of diseases that can damage the optic nerve. It has no warning signs and



causes vision loss if left untreated. The only way to detect glaucoma before any vision is lost is to get a comprehensive dilated eye exam every one to two years if you are at higher risk for the disease.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
National Institutes of Health
National Eye Institute

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People at higher risk include African Americans over age 40; everyone over age 60, especially Mexican Americans; and those with a family history of glaucoma.

Why do people at higher risk for glaucoma need a comprehensive dilated eye exam?

People at higher risk for glaucoma should have this exam every one to two years to find out if they have early signs of the disease. The early stages of glaucoma have no warning signs. Primary open-angle glaucoma (POAG) is the most common form. At first, POAG has no symptoms. It causes no pain, and vision remains normal. In a comprehensive dilated eye exam, your eye care professional can get a better look at the optic nerve to check for early signs of glaucoma before any vision is lost.

Can glaucoma be cured?

No. There is no cure for glaucoma. Vision lost from the disease cannot be restored.

Can glaucoma be treated?

Yes. Immediate treatment for early stage, primary open-angle glaucoma can delay progression of the disease. That's why early diagnosis is important. However, vision already lost cannot be restored. Glaucoma is treated with medication, laser surgery, and conventional surgery.

How can you protect your vision?

The best protection for people at higher risk for glaucoma is early detection and treatment. If you fall into one of the groups identified as being at higher risk for the disease, make sure to get a comprehensive dilated eye exam every one to two years.