

Glaucoma - Are You at Risk?

There are approximately 2.2 million Americans age 40 and older who have glaucoma, and many are at risk for going blind because they do not know they have the disease. You could be one of them.

Glaucoma is a condition in which the optic nerve, responsible for transmitting visual information from the eye to the brain, is damaged. Although the nerve damage is usually associated with elevated pressure inside the eye, other factors can be involved. It may begin with the loss of peripheral vision and then advance to a reduction in central vision. Glaucoma can potentially lead to vision loss or blindness.

Most people who have glaucoma don't notice symptoms until they begin to lose some vision. But vision loss from glaucoma can be prevented if it's detected and treated in time. As part of Glaucoma Awareness Month in January, Eye M.D.'s urge you to get a complete eye exam if you're at risk for developing glaucoma.

So, who's at risk? African-Americans over age 40, people with a family history of glaucoma, individuals over age 60, people with other health conditions, such as diabetes and those that have experienced a serious eye injury are also considered at risk. Anyone who falls into one or more of these categories should talk with an Eye M.D. about how often an eye examination should be conducted to ensure good vision.

Although glaucoma cannot be cured, early detection and treatment can usually preserve vision. Know your risk factors and have your eyes examined at the intervals recommended by your Eye M.D.