

Glaucoma

Prevention and Advice

It is very important for the patient to know that surgery does not bring back the lost sight but it could help – by decreasing the eye pressure – to save the existing sight from being lost.

Q: How to prevent this disease?

1. Yearly eye checkup specially for people over 30 years old
2. When you experience any of the glaucoma symptoms such as blurring, progressive constricted visual field, severe pain in the eye or increase in the size of the cornea (for children) you need to consult an ophthalmologist as soon as possible to avoid complications.
3. If there is family history of this disease you need to get your eyes checked up and inform the ophthalmologist with that.

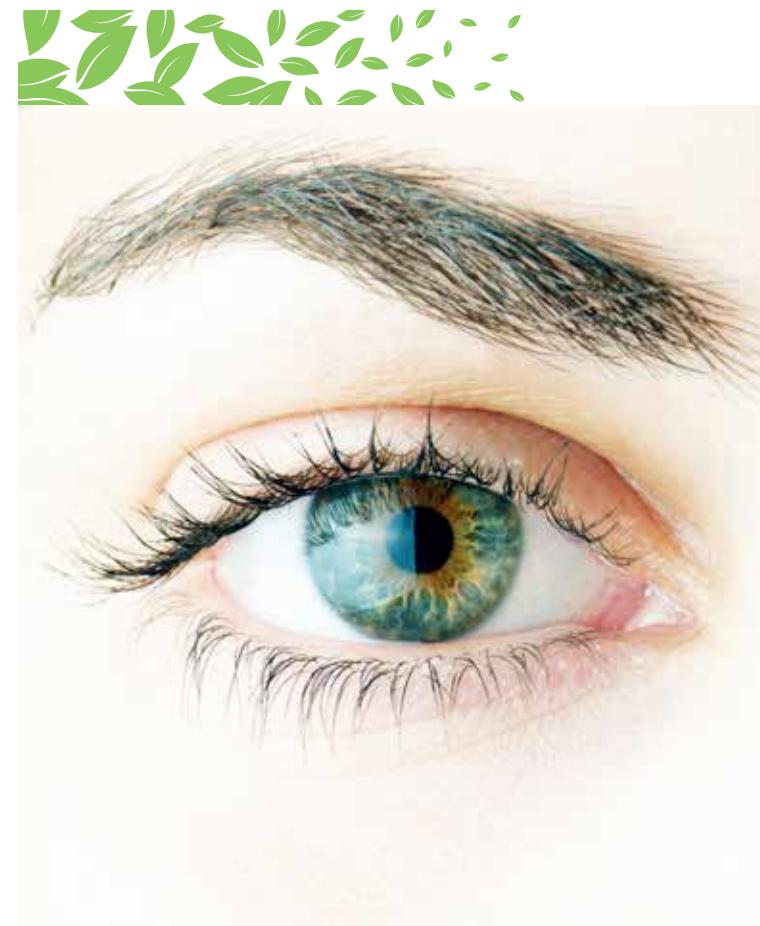
Q: What is an important advice for glaucoma patients?

Glaucoma patients need to know that glaucoma is a chronic disease which means they have to take the treatment throughout their life in order to preserve their sight.

Patient should always remember the following:

1. Using their eye drops as prescribed by the ophthalmologist and also make sure to keep their medicines in a place they can easily get it but out of reach of children.
2. Maintaining follow up with the ophthalmologist and as instructed.
3. Informing their ophthalmologist about any side effects of the eye drop they are using, if any.
4. Getting enough quantity of eye drops from any pharmacy so they do not finish it before the time prescribed by their ophthalmologists. They must not ignore to use their eye drops.

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Glaucoma

Glaucoma (or what is known as the blue water) is considered one of the most common eye diseases in Qatar. Glaucoma is the second cause of blindness worldwide.

Q: What is Glaucoma?

Glaucoma is an eye disease that causes damage to the optic nerve. The optic nerve function is to transmit light signals seen by the eye to the brain that will translate these signals into the real images that we see.

Q: What are causes of Glaucoma?

There are many causes of glaucoma. The most common cause is high eye pressure resulting from defective aqueous humor secreted by the ciliary tissues. High eye pressure causes damage to the optic nerve tissues progressively, which leads to constricted visual field.

If the high eye pressure is not controlled, it will result in complete damage to the optic nerve which will lead to loss of vision. It is very important to know that the damaged part of the optic nerve is completely incurable of glaucoma. That is why early diagnosis and treatment are required to prevent the loss of vision.

Q: Who is susceptible to Glaucoma?

Anybody, young or old, is actually susceptible. But some people are more susceptible to Glaucoma than others like:

- People with family history of glaucoma
- People over 30 years old
- Diabetics
- Myopic patients
- People who had eye trauma or severe iris inflammation

Q: What are different types of Glaucoma?

Open angle glaucoma: It is the most common type which affects both eyes. It starts with a progressively increased eye pressure and defective vision without pain and finally causes constricted visual field. This kind of glaucoma is also known as "Sight Thief" because the patient does not feel any symptoms at the first stage of the disease, but with its progress, the patient will start to feel visual impairment and constricted visual field due to optic nerve damage. There is another type of Open Angle Glaucoma in which the eye pressure level is normal but still the optic nerve gets damaged for unknown reasons.

Acute Closed Angle Glaucoma: It differs from the first type. In this case, a sudden increase in the eye pressure happens with a strong pain in the and the head. The patient will also feel sick. This kind of glaucoma is considered as an emergency case that must be cured as soon as possible because high eye pressure could cause vision loss within a short time.

Secondary Glaucoma: Secondary Glaucoma happens as a result of one of the following reasons:

- Repeated iris inflammations
- Long usage of cortisone
- Eye trauma
- Severe cases of cataract
- Diabetic retinopathy

Congenital Glaucoma: Children could be born with congenital glaucoma or get develop it in the first years of their lives. The disease can also be transmitted hereditarily. The symptoms can include: increase in the eye size especially the size of the cornea, corneal haze and difficulty in opening eye to light. In this case surgical intervention is required.

Q: How glaucoma is diagnosed?

The ophthalmologist would check the following:-

- Eye Pressure
- Angle of the Anterior Chamber using a special lens
- The Optic Nerve
- The Visual Field



Q: What are treatments of glaucoma?

After the ophthalmologist diagnoses and identifies glaucoma and determines its stage, the ophthalmologist will prescribe eye drops that help decrease the eye pressure by opening a path for the aqueous humor in the eye, in an attempt to balance the pressure. There are several types of such drops. The important thing is to keep using this treatment regularly, and without negligence.

Some cases of glaucoma might require laser treatment. The ophthalmologist could use surgical treatment when medicines fail to bring back the eye pressure to its normal balance, or when the disease is in the late stages.