



# UNDERSTANDING Glaucoma

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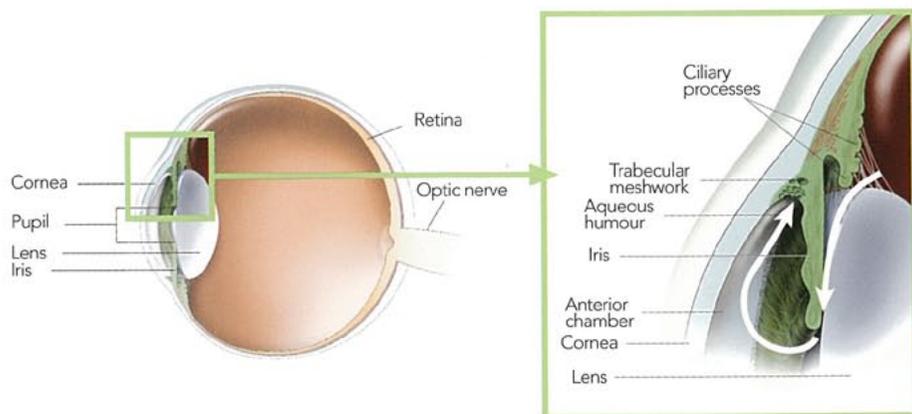
A GUIDE TO SAVING YOUR SIGHT  
For Glaucoma Patients and Patients at Risk

# The Healthy Eye

A watery fluid called "aqueous humour" helps keep your eye healthy, and then drains away as new fluid is made. A balanced flow of this fluid keeps your eye pressure (intraocular pressure or IOP) at a safe level.<sup>1</sup>

## Trabecular Meshwork

The aqueous humour drains out through a sponge-like trabecular meshwork around the place where the coloured and white parts of the eye meet.<sup>1</sup>



## Intraocular Pressure (IOP)

### What Is Normal IOP?

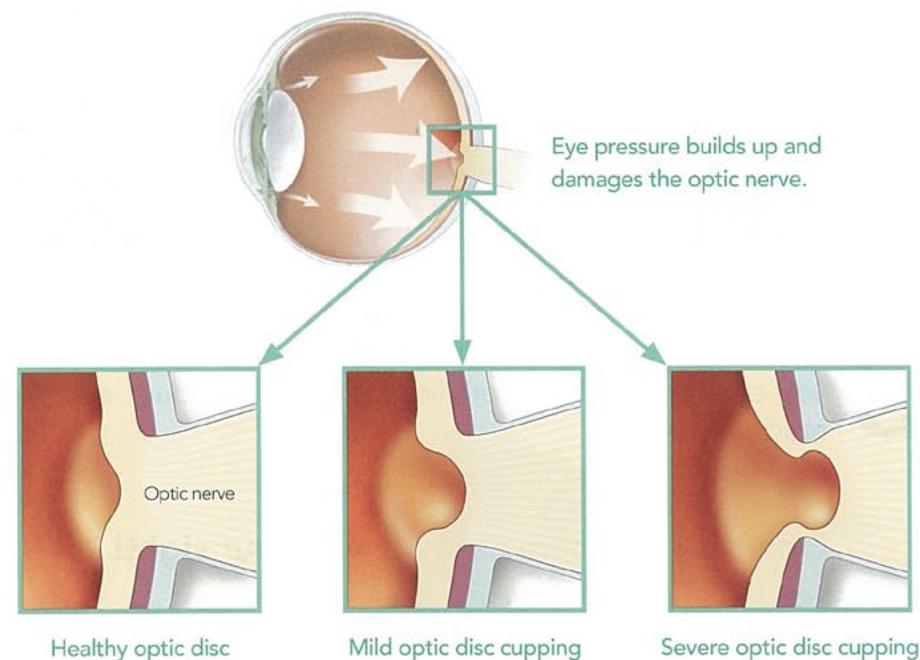
Normal eye pressure is usually between 12 to 20 mm Hg, however, safe eye pressure can be different for different people (see Risk Factors on page 5).<sup>1</sup>

# The Eye with Glaucoma

Glaucoma involves damage to the optic nerve, most often caused by high pressure (IOP) inside the eye due to a buildup of excess fluid. High eye pressure is not always a sign that you have glaucoma but may be an indication you are at risk of developing it.<sup>1</sup>

## High Pressure in the Eye Damages the Optic Nerve

Pressure that is too high for your eyes can damage and kill the nerves that connect your eyes to the brain. As the smaller nerves that make up the bigger optic nerve are damaged, you start to lose your sight. As time passes, more nerves are damaged and can eventually lead to blindness.<sup>1</sup>



As the nerve fibres are damaged and die, the optic disc begins to hollow out. This is known as "cupping." As more nerve fibres die, the cup becomes bigger. The amount of cupping helps tell your ophthalmologist how many fibres have been lost.<sup>1</sup>

## Why Should Glaucoma Be Important to Me?

**1** If glaucoma is not treated, it can lead to permanent blindness. Treatment can stop the damage, but nothing can reverse or fix damaged nerves. This is why it is important for you to be examined regularly and to use your drops so blindness does not happen.<sup>1</sup>

**2** Glaucoma starts by damaging your side or peripheral vision, something you may not even notice at first. As it gets worse, you could even get tunnel vision and not see objects off to the side unless you look directly at them.<sup>1</sup>

**Shrinking "tunnel" vision will interfere with your work, leisure activities, and driving ability.<sup>1</sup>**



NORMAL



MODERATE GLAUCOMA



SEVERE GLAUCOMA

**3** If glaucoma damages too much of your side vision, you could lose your driver's licence and even your reading vision.<sup>1</sup>

**Don't let glaucoma steal away your sight!**

**The good news is that with treatment under the care of an eye doctor, the majority of glaucoma patients do well.**

## Your Glaucoma Assessment

### 1) Eye Pressure (IOP) and Glaucoma Risk Factors

Your chance of getting glaucoma or having more glaucoma damage can depend on many things.<sup>1</sup>

**These risk factors may include:**

- Higher levels of intraocular pressure in the eye (IOP)<sup>1</sup>
- Increased age<sup>1</sup>
- A family history of glaucoma<sup>1</sup>
- Black African or Southeast Asian heritage<sup>1</sup>
- Large changes in eye pressure during the day or from day to day<sup>1</sup>
- Thinner corneas (the transparent front surface of the eye)
- Suspicious-looking optic nerves and/or a difference in the optic nerves between the two eyes<sup>1</sup>
- Clogging of drainage within the eye (e.g., pigmentary dispersion syndrome, pseudoexfoliation syndrome)
- Vascular disease such as diabetes, high or low blood pressure<sup>1</sup>
- Long-term use of steroids or cortisone
- Very nearsighted or farsighted eyes<sup>1</sup>
- Eye injury or eye surgery
- Other



## Prescription Eye Drops

If you are diagnosed with glaucoma or if your intraocular pressure (IOP) is considered high enough to risk vision loss, your doctor will likely prescribe eye drops to reduce pressure in the affected eye(s).<sup>1</sup> See page 9 for instructions on how to put your drops in.

### Personalized Drop Instructions

Date \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF DROP	DROPS PER DAY	TIME OF INSTILLATION
<input type="radio"/> Lumigan® RC 	<input type="radio"/> 1 drop once daily <sup>2</sup>	<input type="radio"/> Evening _____
<input type="radio"/> Xalatan® 	<input type="radio"/> 1 drop once daily <sup>3</sup>	<input type="radio"/> Evening _____
<input type="radio"/> Travatan® Z 	<input type="radio"/> 1 drop once daily <sup>4</sup>	<input type="radio"/> Evening _____
<input type="radio"/> Betagan® 	<input type="radio"/> 1 drop twice daily <sup>5</sup>	<input type="radio"/> Morning _____ <input type="radio"/> Evening _____
<input type="radio"/> Timoptic-XE® 	<input type="radio"/> 1 drop in the morning <sup>6</sup>	<input type="radio"/> Morning _____
<input type="radio"/> Combigan® 	<input type="radio"/> 1 drop twice daily <sup>7</sup>	<input type="radio"/> Morning _____ <input type="radio"/> Evening _____
<input type="radio"/> Cosopt® 	<input type="radio"/> 1 drop twice daily <sup>8</sup>	<input type="radio"/> Morning _____ <input type="radio"/> Evening _____
<input type="radio"/> Cosopt® Preservative Free 	<input type="radio"/> 1 drop twice daily <sup>9</sup>	<input type="radio"/> Morning _____ <input type="radio"/> Evening _____
<input type="radio"/> Azarga® 	<input type="radio"/> 1 drop twice daily <sup>10</sup>	<input type="radio"/> Morning _____ <input type="radio"/> Evening _____
<input type="radio"/> DuoTrav® 	<input type="radio"/> 1 drop in the morning <sup>11</sup>	<input type="radio"/> Morning _____
<input type="radio"/> Xalacom® 	<input type="radio"/> 1 drop in the morning <sup>12</sup>	<input type="radio"/> Morning _____
<input type="radio"/> Alphagan® P 	<input type="radio"/> 1 drop three times daily <sup>13</sup>	<input type="radio"/> Morning _____ <input type="radio"/> Afternoon _____ <input type="radio"/> Evening _____
<input type="radio"/> Trusopt® 	<input type="radio"/> 1 drop three times daily <sup>14</sup>	<input type="radio"/> Morning _____ <input type="radio"/> Afternoon _____ <input type="radio"/> Evening _____
<input type="radio"/> Azopt® 	<input type="radio"/> 1 drop twice daily <sup>15</sup>	<input type="radio"/> Morning _____ <input type="radio"/> Evening _____
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> Morning _____ <input type="radio"/> Afternoon _____ <input type="radio"/> Evening _____
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> Morning _____ <input type="radio"/> Afternoon _____ <input type="radio"/> Evening _____

Before using eye drops, wash your hands. Sit down and tilt your head back, or lie down and look at the ceiling. Then follow these steps:



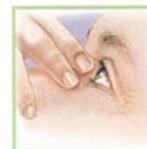
1. Make a pocket in your lower lid by pulling down with your index finger.



2. Look up. Squeeze one **or two drops** into the pocket in your lower lid. Don't blink, wipe your eye, or touch the bottle to your eye or face.



3. Close your eye. Press the inside corner of the eye (this stops the drop from draining into your throat). Continue pressing for 2 to 3 minutes.



4. If the drop misses your eye, repeat steps 1–3.

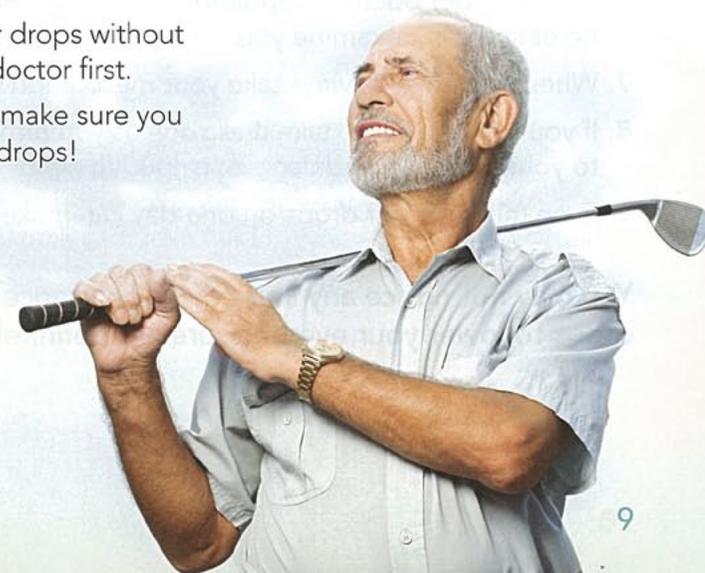
5. After waiting 5 minutes, wash off (not wipe) any excess drops from your eyelids.

**Repeat steps 1 through 5 for each eye and each kind of drop you use. Wait at least 3 to 5 minutes between drops.**

**If you have difficulties, see your pharmacist for advice.**

Never stop using your drops without talking with your eye doctor first.

Your pharmacist must make sure you **never** run out of your drops!



# The Importance of Taking Your Drops

## Following your doctor's advice is very important!

Once you have been diagnosed with glaucoma, it is important to continue your drops even if you feel fine or even experience some temporary eye redness. Remembering to take your eye drops is easier if you make it part of your daily routine. Committing to taking your medication every day and at the same time will help you save your sight!<sup>1</sup>

## Remember

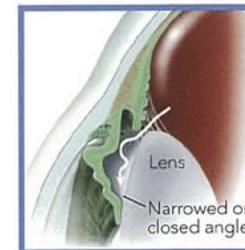
1. Glaucoma vision damage can be prevented when you use your drops every day.
2. If you don't use your drops, they won't work!
3. Keep yourself on a regular schedule to make it easier to remember to put in your drops. For example, link taking your drops with brushing your teeth in the morning or watching a TV program. Always keep your medications where you will see them every day so you will not forget to use them.
4. Always bring your most recently dispensed glaucoma drops and box with your pharmacist's information to your doctor's visit to keep your doctor informed.
5. Check with your pharmacist for when you need repeats of your glaucoma medications so you never run out of drops.
6. Keep all your doctor's appointments. Your doctor can't help you if he or she can't examine you.
7. When you travel, always take your medication with you.
8. If you forget a dose, take it as soon as you remember, then return to your normal schedule.
9. Even missing your drops on one day can make a difference.

You may not notice any immediate difference in your vision, but drops to lower your eye pressure are definitely working for you!

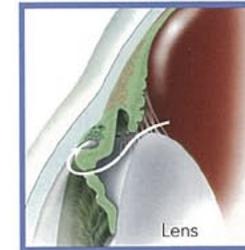
# Additional Treatment for Glaucoma: Laser

Laser treatment can help your glaucoma, and the type of laser treatment depends on the type of glaucoma you have.

- 1 In closed-angle glaucoma, a small opening is used to allow fluid to drain. This can prevent sudden or "acute" glaucoma without the need for any additional medication.

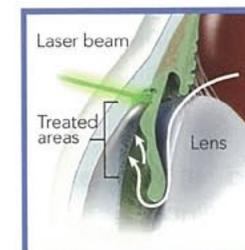


In closed-angle glaucoma, fluid becomes trapped before it can even get to the meshwork.<sup>1</sup>



A hole in the iris, or coloured part of the eye, can help fluid to circulate properly.<sup>1</sup>

- 2 In open-angle glaucoma, laser trabeculoplasty can help fluid drain through a clogged meshwork.<sup>1</sup>



In open-angle glaucoma, fluid cannot drain through a clogged meshwork. Laser trabeculoplasty increases the meshwork's ability to drain fluid.<sup>1</sup>



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her contributions to this publication.