

# **Glaucoma Awareness**

M o n t h

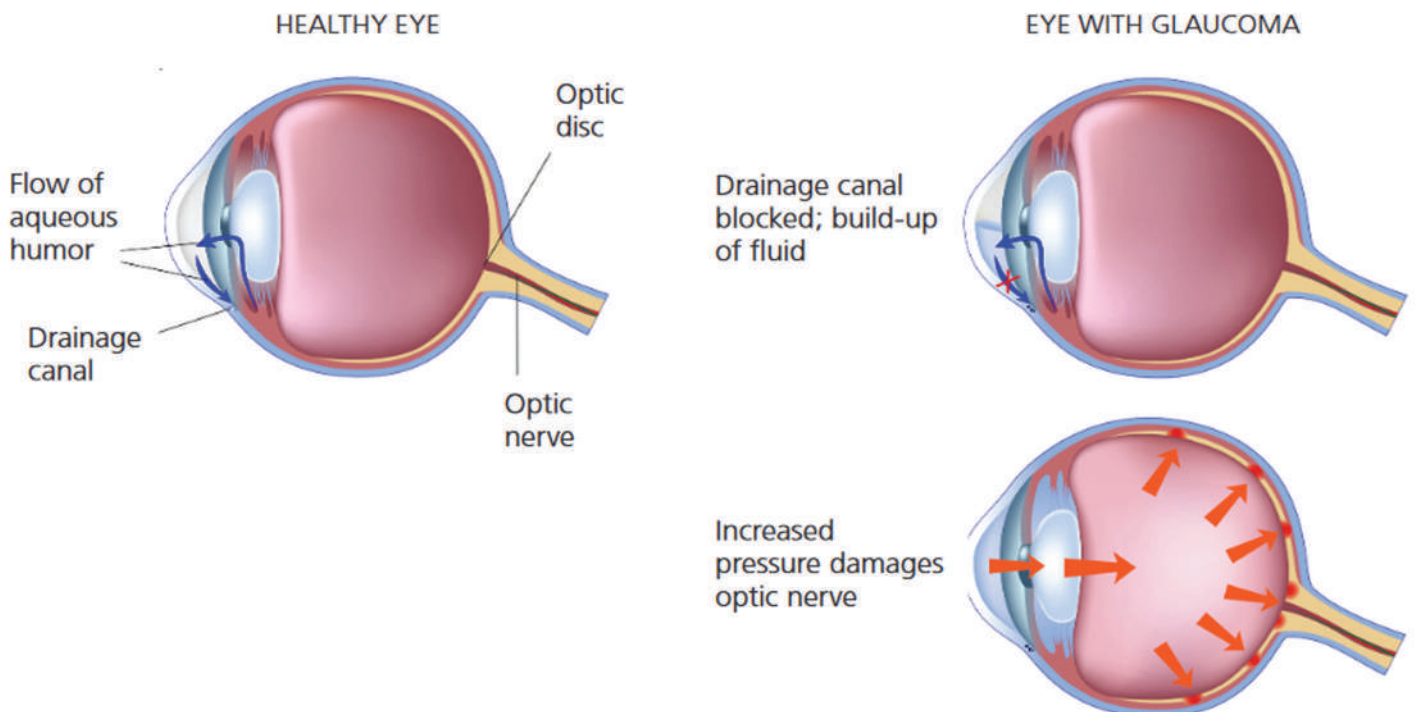


# WHAT IS GLAUCOMA?

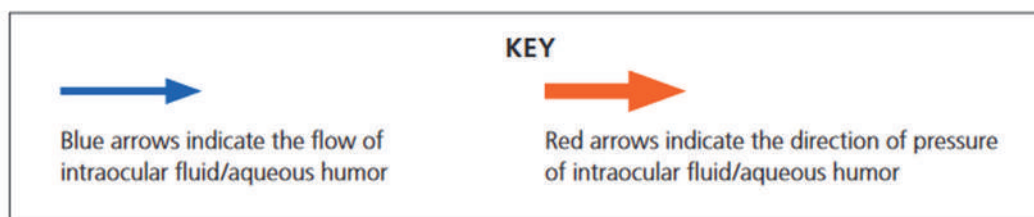
Glaucoma is an eye disease that gradually steals your vision. Usually, glaucoma has no symptoms in its early stages. But without proper treatment glaucoma can lead to blindness. The good news is that with regular eye exams, early detection, and treatment, you can preserve your sight.

You have millions of nerve fibers that run from your retina to form the optic nerve. These fibers meet at the optic disc. In most types of glaucoma, the eye's drainage system becomes clogged so the intraocular fluid cannot drain. As the fluid builds up, it causes pressure to build inside the eye, which can damage these sensitive nerve fibers and result in vision loss. As the fibers are damaged and lost, the optic disc begins to hollow and develops a cupped shape. Doctors can identify this cupping shape in their examinations.

## DEVELOPMENT OF GLAUCOMA



The blockage of drainage canals at the front of the eye causes fluid to build up and increases eye pressure. This can lead to optic nerve damage at the back of the eye.



For more information please visit: [www.glaucoma.org](http://www.glaucoma.org)

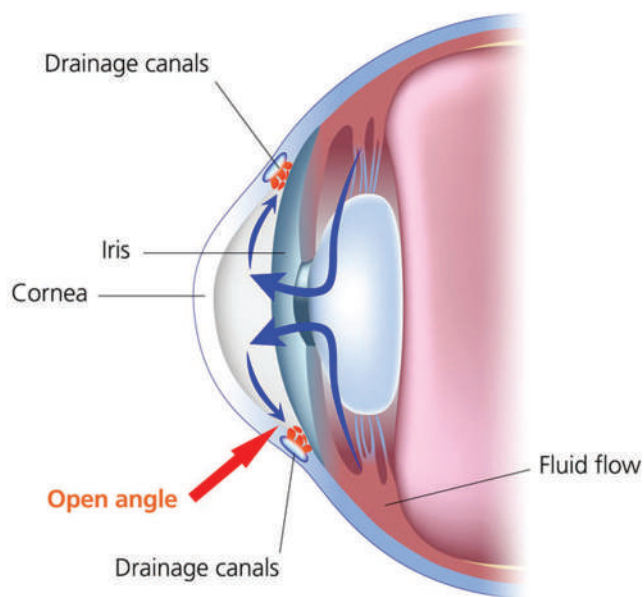
# THE 2 MAIN TYPES OF GLAUCOMA

## Open-Angle Glaucoma

*Open-angle glaucoma, the most common form of glaucoma, accounting for at least 90% of all glaucoma cases:*

- *Is caused by the slow clogging of the drainage canals, resulting in increased eye pressure*
- *Has a wide and open angle between the iris and cornea*
- *Develops slowly and is a lifelong condition as symptoms and damage that are not noticed.*
- *“Open-angle” means that the angle where the iris meets the cornea is as wide and open as it should be. Open-angle glaucoma is also called primary or chronic glaucoma. It is the most common type of glaucoma, affecting about three million Americans.*

FLUID PATHWAY IN OPEN-ANGLE GLAUCOMA



## Angle-Closure Glaucoma

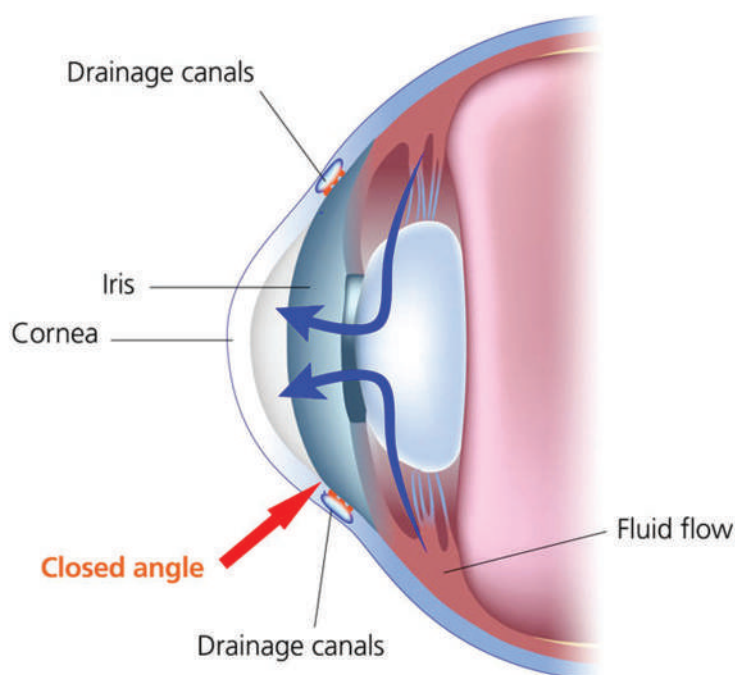
*Angle-closure glaucoma, a less common form of glaucoma:*

- *Is caused by blocked drainage canals, resulting in a sudden rise in intraocular pressure*
- *Has a closed or narrow angle between the iris and cornea*
- *Develops very quickly*
- *Has symptoms and damage that are usually very noticeable*
- *Demands immediate medical attention.*

*It is also called acute glaucoma or narrow-angle glaucoma. Unlike open-angle glaucoma, angle-closure glaucoma is a result of the angle between the iris and cornea closing.*

*To learn more please visit: [www.glaucoma.org](http://www.glaucoma.org)*

FLUID PATHWAY IN ANGLE-CLOSURE GLAUCOMA



# FOUR KEY FACTS ABOUT GLAUCOMA



## **Glaucoma is a leading cause of blindness**

Glaucoma can cause blindness if it is left untreated. And unfortunately approximately 10% of people with glaucoma who receive proper treatment still experience loss of vision.

## **Everyone is at risk for Glaucoma**

Everyone is at risk for glaucoma from babies to senior citizens. Older people are at a higher risk for glaucoma but babies can be born with glaucoma (approximately 1 out of every 10,000 babies born in the United States). Young adults can get glaucoma, too. African Americans in particular are susceptible at a younger age.

## **There may be no symptoms to warn you**

With open-angle glaucoma, the most common form, there are virtually no symptoms. Usually, no pain is associated with increased eye pressure. Vision loss begins with peripheral or side vision. You may however compensate for this unconsciously by turning your head to the side, and may not notice anything until significant vision is lost. The best way to protect your sight from glaucoma is to get tested. If you have glaucoma, treatment can begin immediately.

## **There is no cure (yet) for Glaucoma**

Glaucoma is not curable, and vision lost cannot be regained. With medication and/or surgery, it is possible to halt further loss of vision. Since open-angle glaucoma is a chronic condition, it must be monitored for life. Diagnosis is the first step to preserving your vision.

*For more information please visit: [www.glaucoma.org](http://www.glaucoma.org)*