

Keep Vision in Your Future

## Glaucoma Awareness Month



### Don't lose sight of glaucoma.

#### *Protect your family's vision with early detection.*

Nothing is more important to you than family. You cherish every birthday party, holiday gathering, and special celebration together. So, don't let glaucoma make you lose sight of these deeply treasured traditions.

Glaucoma is a group of diseases that damages the eye's optic nerve, which carries visual signals to the brain. It can lead to vision loss or blindness if left untreated. Primary open-angle glaucoma is the most common form of this disease and often has no early warning signs. Quite frequently, by the time people are diagnosed with glaucoma, they've already noticed changes to their side, or peripheral, vision. It's important not to wait until you notice problems with your vision to see your eye care professional.

"Studies show that at least half of all persons with glaucoma don't know they have this potentially blinding eye disease," said National Eye Institute (NEI) director Dr. Paul Sieving. "The good news is that glaucoma can be detected in its early stages through a comprehensive dilated eye exam."

A comprehensive dilated eye exam is a procedure in which an eye care professional places drops in your eyes to dilate (or widen) the pupil to examine the back of your eyes and your optic nerve for signs of disease. This exam may help save your sight because when glaucoma is detected early, it can be controlled through medications or surgery.

It is very important that those at higher risk for glaucoma—which includes everyone over age 60, especially Hispanics/Latinos, and those with a family history of the disease—get a comprehensive dilated eye exam every 1 to 2 years.

Keep sight of precious family moments and keep vision in your future. Get a comprehensive dilated eye exam and encourage family members to do so as well. A low-cost exam may be available to you through Medicare. For more information, call 1-800-MEDICARE or visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov).

For additional information about glaucoma, visit [www.nei.nih.gov/glaucoma](http://www.nei.nih.gov/glaucoma) or call NEI at 301-496-5248.



National Eye Institute



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