

GLAUCOMA

Glaucoma is a collection of different eye conditions that all involve damage to the optic nerve, the primary nerve responsible for relaying visual information from your eyes to your brain. Damage to this nerve results in vision loss that may be sudden or gradual, depending on the type of glaucoma.

The most common form of glaucoma is known as open-angle glaucoma, which results in gradual vision loss as

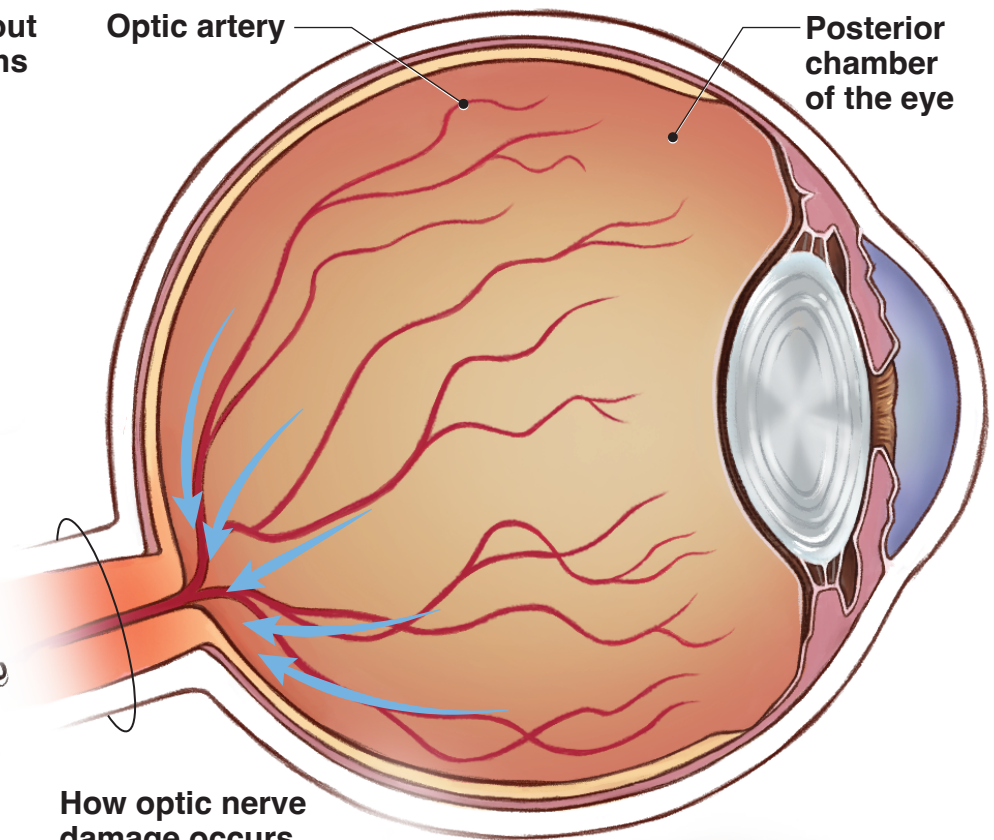
an increase in intraocular pressure damages the optic nerve. Although glaucoma is commonly associated with an increase in intraocular pressure, it is still important to receive comprehensive eye exams that focus on more than just eye pressure.

The less common form of glaucoma, known as normal-tension glaucoma, can occur even in people with healthy intraocular pressure. Moreover, most instances of glaucoma do not involve

symptoms that the patient can observe themselves. Therefore, the best preventative measure for glaucoma is regular comprehensive eye examinations to detect for possible indicators for glaucoma. Individuals who are at higher risk for glaucoma, such as those with Black, Asian, or Hispanic heritage, or who are over the age of 55, should be screened more frequently. Once found, glaucoma requires lifelong treatment to prevent further vision loss or blindness.

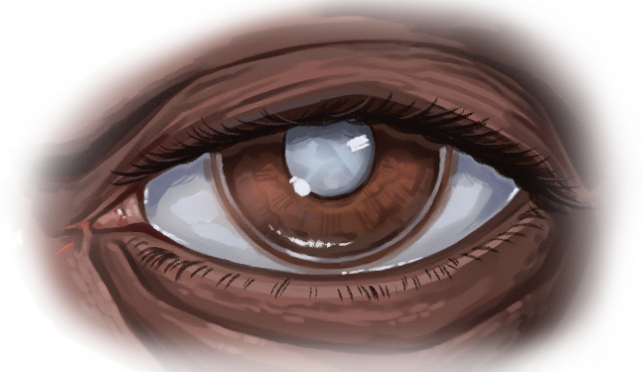
Glaucoma often presents without any symptoms. When symptoms do occur, they may include:

- Blindspots or narrowing of peripheral vision
- Nausea or vomiting
- Severe eye pain
- Blurred vision
- Halos around light sources



How optic nerve damage occurs

When pressure in the eye is high, the fluid in the posterior chamber damages the optic nerve by pushing into it.



Late-stage glaucoma sometimes presents with a characteristic cloudy pupil. Otherwise, it can be difficult to tell if an individual is developing glaucoma without an eye exam.