

HEALTH AWARENESS

Learn The Facts About How To Detect And Manage Glaucoma

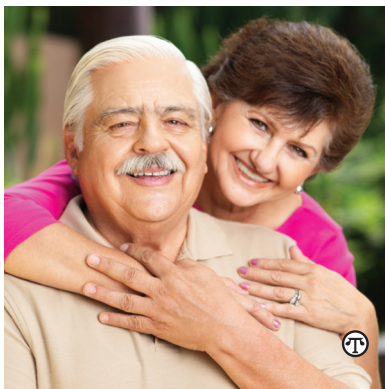
(NAPSA)—Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness. Millions of Americans are living with the condition, and many more may not know they have it. Over the next several years, the number of people with glaucoma is expected to rise.

Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases. In most cases, it is associated with increased pressure within the eye. Often called a “silent” disease, glaucoma may progress without symptoms until irreversible damage is done.

However, early detection and proper management may help prevent the potentially serious outcomes of glaucoma. But today, the condition continues to be underdiagnosed and often overlooked. Many patients who have been diagnosed with glaucoma do not stay on track with their personal treatment plan.

There are many things you can do to help become a better advocate for your eye health. Leading eye care and aging experts have joined for the TAKE on Glaucoma campaign (Take Action to Know your Eyes), to help educate Americans about understanding and managing glaucoma.

“As a practicing ophthalmologist, I see firsthand from my patients just how important and challenging it can be to make glaucoma a priority,” said James C. Tsai, M.D., chairman, Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, Yale University and TAKE on Glaucoma spokesperson. “There are many things in life that we must juggle, but taking the time to monitor your eye health and manage glaucoma should not be ignored.”



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The TAKE on Glaucoma campaign has useful tips that you can use—whether you have glaucoma, are at risk for the condition or know someone who has it.

Understand the Risk Factors for Glaucoma

Many Americans may be unaware of the risk factors for glaucoma.

The most common risk factors include family history, ethnicity (African American or Hispanic), age (greater than age 40 in African Americans or above age 60 in the general population), nearsightedness (also called myopia) and pressure in the eye. There are other possible risk factors such as low central cornea thickness, diabetes, hypertension, eye trauma and use of steroids.

Schedule Regular Comprehensive Eye Exams

It is important to visit your eye doctor for regular, comprehensive eye exams to evaluate and help maintain your eye health.

Depending on your age and risk factors, it is recommended that you have an eye exam every one to two years. Do you know when you last had one?

During your eye exam, it is important that your eye doctor dilates your eyes and also checks the pressure in your eye. These are critical steps to monitor for potential signs of glaucoma symptoms or disease progression.

Create a Disease Management Plan That Works for You

If you are diagnosed with glaucoma, work with your eye doctor to create a disease management plan that best fits your lifestyle and routine. Your eye doctor may recommend prescription eye drops, laser treatment or other types of surgery as part of your plan. While these treatments may help reduce high pressure in your eye, they do not improve sight already lost because of glaucoma. This is why it is important that you act now.

If you believe you'll have trouble staying on track with your treatment plan or taking your medication correctly, tell your eye doctor. He or she can help address these challenges. Family and close friends can also be good sources of support with reminders or other ways to help you follow your treatment plan.

Learn More

To learn more, visit www.takeonglaucoma.com.

TAKE on Glaucoma is an educational program developed, in partnership, by The Glaucoma Foundation, the Alliance for Aging Research and Merck, and is funded by Merck.