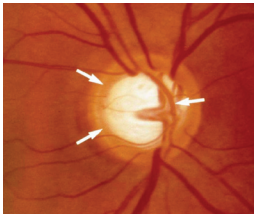


# Glaucoma

## What is Glaucoma? Are you at risk for Glaucoma? Do you have a family history of glaucoma?

Glaucoma is an optic nerve disease. The optic nerve is the "cable" that connects the eye to the brain.

In glaucoma, the optic nerve becomes damaged and thins out. During the eye examination, it looks much like a doughnut, with a circle on the outside and a circle in the middle. If the middle circle (the doughnut hole) becomes larger, the doughnut



becomes thinner. This thinning may be related to increased pressures in the eye, blood flow issues such as high blood pressure, diabetes, or other vascular issues, or injury. Family history of glaucoma may also increase your chances of having glaucoma.

To diagnose glaucoma, during your exam, I will

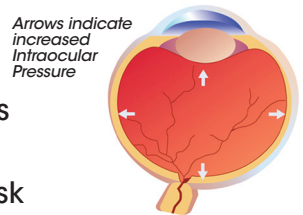
need to measure your eye pressure. At some offices this is done with a puff of air, but at Full Spectrum Family Vision Care, I will use the method that is considered the standard of care for all glaucoma patients. Most patients tend to prefer this method over the air puff and it gives a better measurement. I will also need to examine your optic nerve, which is best done using drops to dilate the pupil. If your pressures are higher or

if your nerve appears thinner, I may ask you to

return for further testing or send you to a specialist for additional testing.

Treatment of glaucoma generally involves using eye

*Please see reverse side...*



*Arrows indicate increased Intraocular Pressure*

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drops once or twice a day to bring the pressure down to protect the optic nerve. Like high blood pressure, medications control the pressure but do not cure it. If you stop the medication, your pressure will increase again. Also, rather than annual examinations, your pressure will need to be checked every four months to ensure that your eyes remain healthy.

Glaucoma can cause blindness if left untreated. Unfortunately, it does NOT have any symptoms, so you may gradually lose vision and not know it. Once you become aware of the loss, it



is too late to get the vision back. The vision loss is **PERMANENT**. If you have a family history of glaucoma or if a finding during your examination is borderline or suspicious for glaucoma, you may also need to be seen more frequently to monitor for any changes or progression. We will pre-appoint your next visit before you leave the office.

I want to protect your eyes from glaucoma and blindness. If you have any questions or concerns about your eyes or eye health, please ask me.

**Thank you for choosing  
Full Spectrum Family Vision  
Care for your eye care needs!**

*Heather L.*  
TRAPHEAGEN, O.D.