

WORLD GLAUCOMA DAY

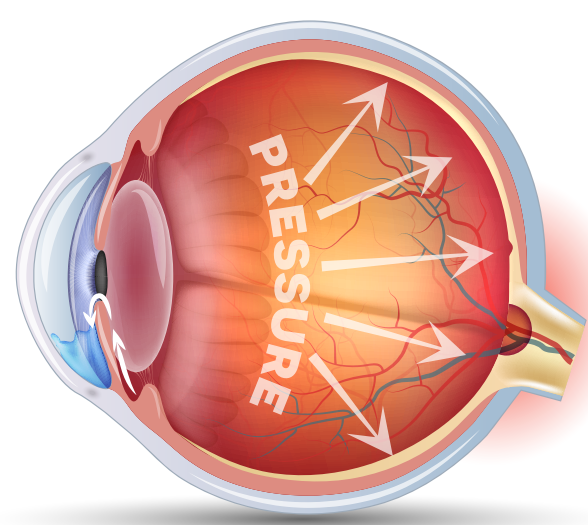
12 March is World Glaucoma Day.

Find out how to recognise the symptoms and get treatment.



What is Glaucoma?

Glaucoma is a condition of increased fluid pressure inside the eye. This pressure can compress the retina and optic nerve, resulting in nerve damage. Glaucoma may lead to partial vision loss and, in severe cases, complete loss of sight.



What are the types and causes?



OPEN-ANGLE (CHRONIC) GLAUCOMA

An increase in eye pressure occurs slowly over time and is painless. The pressure pushes on the optic nerve. The cause is unknown, and it cannot be cured. This kind of Glaucoma tends to run in families, so your risk is higher if a parent or grandparent had it.



ANGLE-CLOSURE (ACUTE) GLAUCOMA

The exit of the aqueous humour fluid is suddenly blocked. This is quick, severe and the very painful increase in pressure in the eye qualifies as a medical emergency.



CONGENITAL GLAUCOMA

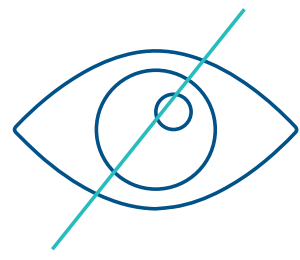
This is caused by abnormal eye development and is present at birth, but is sometimes only noticed a few months later.



SECONDARY GLAUCOMA

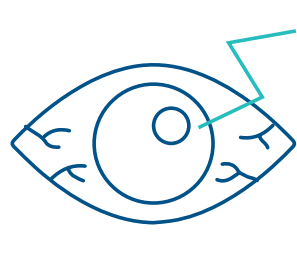
This can be caused by drugs, e.g. corticosteroids, systemic disease, trauma and eye diseases such as uveitis.

What are the signs & symptoms?



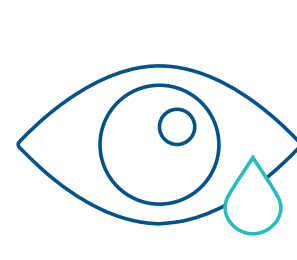
OPEN-ANGLE GLAUCOMA

- No symptoms
- When vision loss occurs, the damage is already severe
- Slow loss of sight (peripheral) vision – tunnel vision
- Advanced Glaucoma can lead to blindness



ANGLE-CLOSURE GLAUCOMA

- Symptoms may initially come and go, and then become worse
- Sudden onset – severe pain in one eye
- Decreased or cloudy vision (steamy vision)
- Rainbow-like halos around lights
- Red eye
- Eye feels swollen
- Nausea and vomiting



CONGENITAL GLAUCOMA

- Symptoms noticed when a child is a few months old
- Enlargement of one or both eyes
- Red eye
- Cloudiness of the front of the eye
- Tearing
- Sensitivity to light

Can I be tested for Glaucoma?

The Society's Eye Care benefit covers composite consultations. If Glaucoma (a PMB condition) is diagnosed, additional benefits may apply, subject to the Society's protocols. (Please refer to pages 23-24 of the [2024 DBBS Member Guide](#) for more information.)



Can Glaucoma be treated?



OPEN-ANGLE GLAUCOMA

- The goal is to reduce the eye pressure. It will be treated with eye drops and, in some cases, also with tablets to decrease the eye pressure.
- Laser surgery – iridotomy.
- Eye surgery if other treatments do not work.



ACUTE ANGLE GLAUCOMA

- Eye drops and medicine are used to lower the eye pressure.
- Emergency operation (laser surgery iridotomy) to open a new pathway in the coloured part of the eye. It relieves the pressure and prevents another attack.



CONGENITAL GLAUCOMA

- Treated with surgery.



SECONDARY GLAUCOMA

- Treating the underlying disease.

Consider the following lifestyle changes to reduce your risk of Glaucoma.



Eat a balanced diet



Exercise



Wear sunglasses outside



Drink small amounts of water throughout the day



Don't smoke



Drink coffee in moderation



Don't drink excessively

NEED HELP? Reach out to the Benefit Society if you have any queries.

@benefitpost@dbbs.co.za | 053 807 3111 | dbbs.co.za