

# Glaucoma 17-Point Checklist



## If you know you have glaucoma:

1. Seek encouragement from family, friends and other sources, such as glaucoma patient support groups.
2. You'll be visiting your eye doctor regularly, so choose one with whom you are comfortable.
3. Write down your questions and notes so that you can make the most of your eye doctor appointments.
4. Tell your eye doctor, family and friends how medications are affecting you.
5. Tell all of your doctors about your eye medications and other drugs you're taking.
6. Read materials from accurate sources to help you understand and live with glaucoma.
7. Ask your doctor to write down your medication schedule. Ask whether "four times a day" means "every six hours" or while you're awake.
8. Always use the proper procedure for applying glaucoma medication in eye drop form.

## Know the following risk factors and ask yourself these questions:

(9–15 puts you at higher risk for glaucoma)

9. Did my parents, grandparents or great-grandparents lose their sight? What was the cause of their vision loss? Glaucoma occurs at least twice as frequently among people who have blood relatives with glaucoma.
10. Do I have diabetes?
11. Am I of African-American or of Afro-Caribbean descent? (if so, you are more likely to get glaucoma at a younger age.)
12. Am I 40 years of age or older?
13. Have I had an eye injury or eye surgery, even as a child?
14. Am I very nearsighted?
15. Have I taken steroids on a long-term basis?
16. Do I qualify for the annual glaucoma screening benefit under Medicare?
17. Most importantly: Have I had an eye exam recently?

## Visit your eye doctor regularly

If you are 55 or older, you should get an eye exam at least once every two years. If you have diabetes or other health problems, you may need to see an eye doctor more often.

During a dilated eye exam, the eye doctor widens the pupil of the eye with eye drops to allow a closer look at the inside of the eye. The exam is not painful, and it may not always be part of an eye exam for a new pair of eyeglasses or contact lenses. A dilated eye exam will allow your eye doctor to check for glaucoma and other eye diseases.



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