Could this be happening to you?

Glaucoma Australia

www.glaucoma.org.au
Phone: 1800 500 880

Glaucoma Australia’s mission is: ‘working to minimise sight disability from glaucoma’

Its purpose is to:
- increase community awareness and understanding of glaucoma and the need for regular eye checks
- provide information and patient education for glaucoma patients, their families and others interested in learning more about the condition
- provide telephone support
- fund Australian glaucoma research.

Further information

National Health and Medical Research Council
www.nhmrc.gov.au
1300 064 672 or (02) 6217 9000

NHMRC Guidelines for the Screening, Prognosis, Diagnosis, Management and Prevention of Glaucoma
What is glaucoma?

GLAUCOMA is a group of eye diseases that damage the optic nerve (the nerve of sight) which carries the message of sight from the eye to the brain. It can lead to vision loss if not detected early and treated effectively.

Glaucoma is a leading cause of preventable eyesight loss worldwide. Without a full eye examination, someone with glaucoma may not realise they have the condition or that they may be losing their sight. Usually there are no symptoms until significant damage has occurred. This is because, in most cases, the peripheral (side) vision disappears first with the central vision being lost last. If vision loss continues it may lead to tunnel vision and eventual blindness.

Glaucoma cannot be self-detected therefore regular eye checks are important in identifying and managing glaucoma.

Who is at risk?

- People at any age, however the level of risk significantly increases for people over 50 years
- The older you are, the greater the risk: from one person in 200 at age 40, to one person in eight at age 80
- People with a family history of glaucoma
- Those with increasing intraocular pressure
- People who have diabetes or suffer migraines
- People with myopia (short sightedness)
- Those who take or have taken, over a period of time, steroids (cortisone)

Even if you do not think you are at risk of glaucoma, it is important to talk to your health care provider about glaucoma during your next visit.

Who to talk to?

Talk to your:
- Family (glaucoma is hereditary)
- GP
- Optometrist
- Ophthalmologist (eye specialist)
- Local health care worker

Your eyes should be checked regularly for signs of the condition. Ask your optometrist or ophthalmologist for a comprehensive glaucoma check. Your eye health care provider will advise you about the frequency of monitoring that you require.

Treatment

Glaucoma is managed by reducing eye pressure through daily administration of eye drops. This is an ongoing treatment as there is no cure for glaucoma.

There are also laser and surgical techniques used to treat glaucoma.