



CATARACTS & GLAUCOMA

Cataracts - clouding of the clear lens of one or both eyes

Glaucoma - damaged optic nerve due to pressure build-up

CATARACTS

Cataracts, which reduce the amount of light that passes through the lens and impair vision, can develop as a result of aging, trauma or endocrine or metabolic disease. Certain medications may also cause this condition. Cataracts usually affect people between the ages of 40 and 50, although the effects are not felt until after age 60. Smoking and ultraviolet radiation are also culprits.

Symptoms:

- Blurry or cloudy vision
- Annual changes in eyeglasses prescription
- Colors appear to be faded or washed out
- Sensitivity to light and glare
- Halos seem to appear around lights

DO:

- Read only under good light.
- Rest the eyes for five minutes for every hour of deskwork by looking out into the distance.
- Eat a healthy diet of fruit, vegetables and fiber.
- Place computer monitors so that they are slightly below eye level when sitting down.
- Wear sunglasses to block harmful ultraviolet rays, even on cloudy days.

DON'T:

- Don't read while inside a moving vehicle.
- Don't smoke.
- Don't over-strain your eyes when watching T.V. Maintain a good distance from the television set.

GLAUCOMA

Glaucoma occurs when the clear liquid or aqueous humor flows in and out of the eye and does not empty, as it should. Severe loss of vision, even blindness, may result. The two primary types of glaucoma, *closed-angle* and *open angle*, are differentiated by their severity and rate of infection. The former is the more severe but less common type and causes a sudden increase in eye pressure that can lead to blindness in as little as one or two days. The latter is caused by an imbalance between the production and drainage of the aqueous humor. The real cause of the blockage is unknown. Risk factors such as age, heredity, and even race have been known to raise the odds of developing this disease. Surgery as well as less invasive treatment options and coping mechanisms are available.

Symptoms:

- Open-angle glaucoma manifests no symptoms in the early stages.
- Over time, peripheral vision seems to have diminished, or disappeared, in cases of open-angle glaucoma.
- Closed-angle glaucoma is more dramatic in its symptoms and may include: blurred or double vision, intense pain over the affected eye, nausea or vomiting, headache, reddening of the eye.

DO'S:

- Wear sunglasses to block harmful ultraviolet rays, even on cloudy days.
- Eat lots of green, leafy vegetables, fruits and fiber.
- Seek medical attention if prescription glaucoma medications cause side effects.

DON'TS:

- Don't smoke. Otherwise, quit.