



LIVING WITH GLAUCOMA

People with glaucoma can have a good quality of life without fear of going blind, if their glaucoma is detected early and treated properly. Glaucoma can affect the day to day activities of an individual and small changes in lifestyle can be beneficial.

1

Glaucoma medication and doctor consult



- Be regular with your eyedrops and visits to the eye doctor.
- Set an alarm reminder every day to use your drops regularly.
- If you are using multiple medications, follow the timings prescribed by your doctor.
- If you use contact lenses, wear them at least 15-20 minutes after eyedrop application.

2

Lifestyle changes: a. Exercise



- Aerobic exercises in moderation, walking, maybe beneficial in reducing eye pressure.
- Certain yoga postures with head down, face down position may increase eye pressure and must be avoided.
- Avoid swimming, contact lenses if you have undergone a glaucoma surgery as it increases chances of infection. Talk to your doctor about it.
- Mindfulness meditation has been shown to lower stress and MAY BE beneficial in reducing eye pressure.

b. Sleep



- Poor sleep can cause eye pressure fluctuations. Sleeping in face down position may cause eye pressure rise. If you have disturbed sleep or excessive snoring or are diagnosed recently with sleep apnea, inform your eye specialist. Treating sleep apnea can positively impact glaucoma.

c. Diet



- Green leafy vegetables, colored fruits and vegetables can positively impact health as they are rich in antioxidants.
- Excessive caffeine intake, drinking about 3-4 cups coffee or tea per day, can increase eye pressure.
- Excessive water drinking in short span of time (1 L in 5-15 minutes), can cause sudden eye pressure spike.

d. Prolonged work on smartphones



- Prolonged work on smartphones in low light conditions may also cause temporary eye pressure increase.

e. Smoking



- Smoking-increases the chance of glaucoma along with other diseases like cataract and macular degeneration.

3

Blood pressure



- Lowered blood pressure in the night maybe associated with glaucoma worsening. Try avoiding night dose of antihypertensive in consult with your physician.

Is it okay to drive vehicles with glaucoma?

Glaucoma patients with visual field defects are at increased risk of road traffic accidents. Patients with moderate to advanced glaucoma must avoid, preferably stop driving, especially at night. Discuss this issue with your doctor.



How can family members help?

The diagnosis of glaucoma itself or progressive blindness due to worsening glaucoma can cause a lot of emotional stress to the patient. In such a situation moral support from family members is crucial. Family can also help out in instilling drops, reminding regarding medication and followup with the doctor. All family members must get screened for glaucoma.



How to cope with low vision?

Various low vision aids like magnifying glasses, CCTV, audio enhancement devices, use of large fonts on computer screens can help visually impaired. A qualified optometrist at the low vision aids clinic can gauge which one could be useful for you and provide training accordingly. Head scanning techniques, use of high contrast labels on objects of daily use and good illumination in rooms are important.

