

Glaucoma suspect



the royal victorian
eye and ear
hospital

Who is a glaucoma suspect?

A glaucoma suspect is a person who is at risk of developing glaucoma. Glaucoma is a group of conditions in which the optic nerve is progressively damaged, often due to increased eye pressure. The optic nerve carries visual information from the eye to the brain and damage can lead to vision loss or blindness.

Risk factors for glaucoma include:

- Raised eye pressure
- A family history of glaucoma
- Near-sightedness
- Optic nerves which appear to be damaged
- Diabetes
- Shallow space between cornea (front of the eye) and iris (coloured part of eye) – this is sometimes referred to as a narrow angle
- Advancing age
- African heritage
- Steroid use
- Eye trauma
- Other: _____

At your examination today, the doctor has noted that you have one or more risk factors for glaucoma.

Ask your doctor to tick the risk factors you have so that you can share this information with your eye care provider.

What do I need to do next?

You need to have a **full eye examination**, including tests to measure your eye pressure, check your peripheral vision, photograph and/or image your optic nerve (nerve fibre layer analysis). This examination will need to be repeated regularly and the time between examinations will depend on your findings.

These tests can be done by a local specialist ophthalmologist, your optometrist or the Australian College of Optometry.



What if my glaucoma tests are abnormal?

Depending on the results, you may need to have more frequent appointments with your ophthalmologist or optometrist to monitor your condition. You may need to have treatment which could include eye drops, laser or surgery. Appropriate treatment can be arranged by a specialist ophthalmologist.

In certain circumstances, they may need to refer you to the Eye and Ear Hospital for specialised testing or surgery. If you have been referred to the hospital and do not receive an appointment within the timeframe suggested by your local ophthalmologist, please follow up with your ophthalmologist or optometrist until you can be seen at the hospital.

Things to remember

- Glaucoma usually has no warning symptoms until it reaches an advanced stage.
- Glaucoma is treatable, so early detection and treatment can prevent vision loss.
- Risk of glaucoma increases with age, so regular follow-up is important.
- Although your GP cannot monitor your risk for glaucoma, they can discuss follow-up with you and provide any needed referral.

More information

If you require further assistance regarding any of the information in this fact sheet you can call the Outpatients Booking Unit on (03) 9929 8500 between 8.00am and 4.00pm, Monday to Friday (except public holidays).

For information on glaucoma and to find an ophthalmologist, visit the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists website www.ranzco.com.

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