# Do you want to know?

## Glaucoma

E02
sheet 1/1

## What is it?

Glaucoma is an eye disease. It is characterized by a painless loss of vision due to nerve damage related to increased pressure of the eye. It is of two types:

- Open angle glaucoma (also called chronic glaucoma) is the most common type. This develops slowly so that any damage to the eye nerve and loss of vision is gradual.
- Acute angle closure glaucoma which is uncommon. In this condition, there is a sudden increase in the pressure within one eye. The eye quickly becomes painful and red.

The following signs and symptoms may occur: headache, blurred vision (halos around lights), nausea and vomiting. When medical therapy fails, laser treatment or operative procedures are needed to preserve remaining vision.

## What do you need to know?

**Drugs**

- Comply with the prescribed medications (eye drops) to prevent further optic (eye) nerve damage. Stopping the medications abruptly leads to further loss of vision.
- Watch out for the side effects of the medications including temporary blurred vision, stinging, and burning sensation.
- Avoid taking aspirin or any medication that may induce bleeding. Consult your physician.
- Contact your physician if prescribed eyedrops are causing burning, severe itching and/or swelling of the eyes.

**Activity**

- Avoid heavy lifting, straining, severe coughing or sneezing and bending the head lower than the waist. Such activities increase the intra-ocular pressure.
- Avoid driving for one week post laser surgery.

**Therapeutic Measures**

- Leave the dressing over the eye with a protective shield for 24 hours after the surgery to protect the eye from injury.
- Use a clean wash cloth to remove the morning discharges
- Avoid rubbing the eyes.
- Wear sunglasses while outdoors.

**Considerations**

Schedule and keep follow up appointments with the surgeon as requested.

## INSTRUCTIONS

**The content of this educational leaflet is of general information. Ask your physician or health care provider if this content applies to you.**

**Prepared by the Nursing Services in coordination with other health care disciplines.**

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