What is glaucoma?

• Glaucoma is a condition that affects the nerve in the eye responsible for vision
• It is usually caused by an increase in pressure in the eye and it is a leading cause of blindness and vision loss
• About 400,000 Canadians had glaucoma in 2007

What put me at higher risk of glaucoma?

• Some eye conditions put a person at higher risk of glaucoma.
• Some common risk factors for glaucoma:
  • Increasing age
  • Migraine history
  • African descent
  • Corticosteroid use
  • Family history of glaucoma

What put me at higher risk of glaucoma?

• Most people with glaucoma can’t tell they have it until the condition has progressed to an advanced stage
• After a loss of more than 40% of the nerve fibres responsible for vision, the person may notice a gradual loss of peripheral vision or they may have tunnel vision

Why do we treat glaucoma?

• Treatment can halt or slow the progression of vision loss
• Treatment can help to preserve the structure of the optic nerve in the eye
• Improve the quality of life of the person with vision loss

Are there non-drug ways of treating glaucoma?

• There are very few non-drug methods for the treatment of glaucoma
• Regular exercise can help lower the pressure in the eye

How is glaucoma treated?

• There are five different classes of medications to treat glaucoma
• Medications are usually given via eye-drop preparation allowing a large amount of medication to go directly into the eye and avoiding other areas of the body
• All Glaucoma medications work to help lower the pressure in the eye
• None of these treatments REVERSE the damage already done to the eye but are designed to prevent future vision loss
• All medications have to be taken daily and long-term in order to control the pressure in the eye
• It is very common that people will need to use several eye drops to control the pressure

Do I have to use my glaucoma drops every day?

• Glaucoma medications are only effective at lowering the pressure in the eye if they are used every day
• Stopping the drops or using them sporadically increases the risk of blindness and the glaucoma worsening
• If you are having trouble using the drops every day, talk to your pharmacist or eye specialist for some tips to make it easier

What is the best way to put in eye drops?

• After putting the drops into the eyes, gently press the corners of the eyes near the nose for one to two minutes. Keep the eyes closed and don’t blink.
• The tip of the medication container must not be allowed to contact the eye or your hand
• When using more than one eye drop, wait at least 5 minutes before using the second eye drop