

GLAUCOMA OVERVIEW

Glaucoma is a very misunderstood disease. Often, people don't realize the severity or who is affected. I hope the following information is helpful.

Prevent Blindness America estimates that over 4 million Americans have glaucoma, but only half know they have it. According to the National Institute of Health, approximately 120,000 Americans are blind from glaucoma, which accounts for 9% to 12% of all cases of blindness in the U.S. Estimates have put the total number of cases of glaucoma worldwide at 65 million.

In a survey done by the Glaucoma Research Foundation in Media, PA. found that:

- **74% of over 1000 people interviewed said they had their eyes examined every two years.**
- **20% of people knew that glaucoma was related to eye pressure. Most however mistakenly thought people could tell if they had glaucoma due to possible symptoms.**
- **50% had heard of glaucoma, but weren't sure what it was.**
- **30% had never heard of glaucoma.**

The economic impact of glaucoma is very evident also, accounting for over 7 million visits to physicians each year. In terms of Social Security benefits, lost tax revenues, and health care expenditures, the cost to the U.S. government is estimated to be over \$1.5 Billion annually according to the National Economic Impact panel.

Although glaucoma is not curable (yet), lost vision cannot be regained, with medication and /or surgery, it's possible to halt further loss of vision. Diagnosis is the first step to preserving sight. This in conjunction with education can help halt the effects of this chronic condition.