

Hi, my name is Manan Sampat. I am a comprehensive ophthalmologist. And I joined with the Ephraim McDowell Eye and Vision Center in September of 2020.

Primarily, when it comes to glaucoma, we like to classify it to two types, whether there is an open angle or a narrow angle. The angle is simply just the drainage system inside the eye that allows the natural fluid of the eye to drain from the eye and enter the blood stream. These are the two main types of glaucoma, but there are many other variants that we do come across from time to time.

Glaucoma is really a problem where the nerve undergoes damage over a long period of time. There are a number of risk factors that we pay attention to, including your age and background, when it comes to your race or ethnicity. But typically, what we usually pay attention to the most is the interocular pressure, which is just the pressure inside the eye that's caused by that fluid.

Over a long period of time, what happens is that the optic nerve, which is the main cable between the eye and the brain, undergoes damage. Typically because of a high pressure. And over time, the side portions of your vision, which we call the peripheral vision, will deteriorate.

And over a long period of time, if glaucoma is not treated adequately or not treated at all, all of that side vision can then kind of come into the center, allowing one person to see only just the central vision well. Unfortunately glaucoma can affect the whole nerve and you can lose vision completely. Before it gets to that point, we like to diagnose it and try to prevent that from happening.

Not strictly. Glaucoma is a condition where if it does affect one person in the family, then we like to think that other people in the family may be at increased risk, but simply because your parents or your grandparents may have had it, or have it, does not mean that you necessarily will have it.

Glaucoma is a chronic condition. And so, when we do diagnose it, it's something that we want to prevent from getting worse. Right now, there's a lot of research being done to figure out if we can stop glaucoma altogether. And perhaps one day, even reverse it. But for now the main approach to treatment is to help prevent it from getting worse.

To treat glaucoma, we typically pay attention to the interocular pressure, the pressure inside the eye., We'd like to lower it because most studies show that you prevent glaucoma from getting worse, or at least reduce the risk of it getting worse, if we do lower the pressure adequately. There are really four main ways of reducing the pressure.

Number one, we can use eye drops. And then if eye drops either don't work or perhaps the glaucoma is more advanced than what eye drops may be able to treat, we can offer other therapies such as lasers, oral pills, or even outright surgery.

Side effects and risks of treatment really depend on which treatment you go ahead and treat the glaucoma with. Typically, all the eye drops are used once or twice per day, and they're very, very safe. Occasionally, they may cause a little burning, but otherwise the drops themselves rarely cause any other side effects.

Glaucoma is a chronic condition and it's very important that it's monitored on a regular basis. Typically, if a patient has either a mild glaucoma or someone from whom we suspect glaucoma may exist, but does not have outright glaucoma, then we'll typically see them perhaps once or twice a year.

If someone has glaucoma that's a little bit more advanced, we may see them a little bit more frequently throughout the year to make sure that the pressure in the eye, the intraocular pressure, is at a safe range to ensure that our testing and many of the parameters that we follow, are not getting worse. Essentially, we just want to make sure that over a long period of time, that the glaucoma is not getting worse.

Glaucoma is a chronic condition that, over time, can lead to complete loss of vision. And unfortunately, it's irreversible. Meaning, if you lose vision from glaucoma, we cannot bring it back. So, if you think perhaps your side vision may not be as good as what you think it should be, or if you find yourself bumping into things on your sides from time to time, these are all great reasons to come see us and have your eyes checked. Glaucoma, again, is a permanent condition. And so, we would like to prevent it from getting worse. We certainly can't reverse it.