

# Glaucoma



## What is it?

Glaucoma is a common eye condition caused by a build-up of pressure in the eye as a result of fluid not being able to drain properly. The increase in pressure causes damage to the optic nerve, which is responsible for transferring the image seen by the eye to the brain.

Damage to the optic nerve affects the edge of your vision (your peripheral vision) first. As a result, glaucoma often goes unnoticed and is only picked up at a routine eye test.

## Diagnosis

To effectively control glaucoma, it is important that glaucoma is diagnosed as early as possible.

Glaucoma can be picked up at a routine eye examination, which you'll receive free in Scotland every two years, or if there is a change to your sight.

The following tests may show signs of glaucoma:

- Visual field test – checks your peripheral vision.
- Eye pressure test – measures the pressure in your eye.
- Optic nerve assessment – examines the back of your eye, checking the health of your optic nerve. This will look different if you have glaucoma.

**If an optometrist finds signs of glaucoma while carrying out these tests, they will refer you to an ophthalmologist at a hospital.**

# Treatment

Glaucoma cannot be cured or reversed, but with the right medical treatment, damage to the eye can be slowed, or, in some cases, stopped. Glaucoma can be treated using eye drops, laser treatment, or surgery. The treatment needed will depend on the type of glaucoma diagnosed and the person's health and medical history. Glaucoma can lead to irreversible sight loss if left untreated.

## We can help you

- Understand your eye condition and the importance of treatment.
- Maintain your independence and continue to do what you enjoy.

**Contact Sight Scotland on 0800 024 8973 for support for all ages living with visual impairment.**

**Contact Sight Scotland Veterans on 0800 035 6409 if you are a veteran with vision loss, or you know a veteran with vision loss, for specialist support.**

“

We will work with you to ensure you are as independent and safe as possible in everyday life – from cooking and reading, to helping you enjoy much-loved hobbies.

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Sharon,  
Sight  
Scotland  
Veterans



**[sightscotland.org.uk](https://sightscotland.org.uk)**

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