

**East Sussex  
Vision Support**

# **Glaucoma**



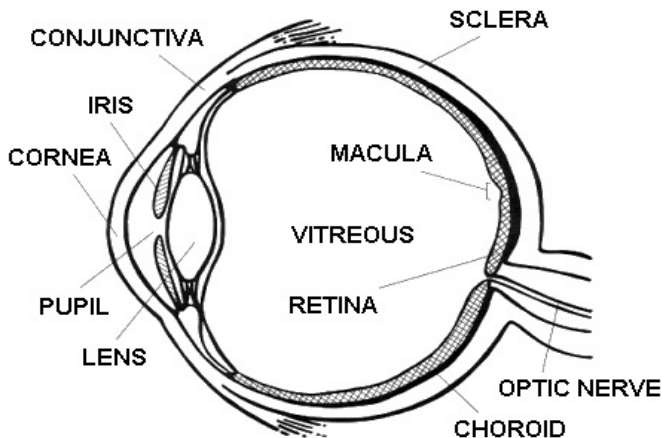
**Supporting people who are  
blind or partially sighted throughout  
East Sussex, Brighton and Hove.**



## GLAUCOMA EXPLAINED

Glaucoma is the name for a group of eye conditions in which the optic nerve is damaged by raised pressure within the eye.

Some parts of the eye, such as the lens, are nourished by a watery fluid called the aqueous humour. This fluid is produced and circulated around the eye and then drains away through microscopic channels near the front of the eye. If the fluid cannot drain away, or too much is produced, the pressure rises. This eye pressure is quite different to blood pressure.



Chronic simple glaucoma is the most common type of the condition, affecting about 1 in 100 people over 40 in the UK.

**Sight may be affected in one or two ways:** The extreme edge of the field of vision may start to fade causing vision to narrow, or blank areas may develop closer to the centre of vision.



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As the pressure in the eye usually increases very slowly, the loss of vision is slow, taking months or even years before it becomes really noticeable. The side vision is affected and so a person will still be able to read and may not be aware of what is happening. It is usually discovered at a sight test and all people over 40 should make sure their sight test includes a test for glaucoma.

The tests are very straightforward and painless. Either a gentle puff of air is blown against the eye, or a small instrument is placed gently against the eye after the eye has been numbed by drops. It is necessary to look into the eye to see if the optic nerve is damaged.

Glaucoma often runs in families and the test is free to those over 40 who have a blood relative with the condition. It is important to diagnose glaucoma early as treatment can prevent further deterioration. The treatment aims to lower the eye pressure by helping the fluid drain or reducing the amount of fluid produced. This may be done with eye drops, pills or a small operation.

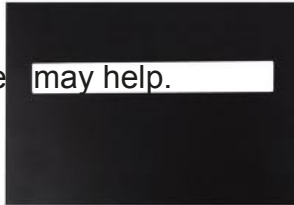
## **LIVING WITH GLAUCOMA**

- Vision may be patchy and blurred and may change from day to day or even hour to hour.
- Lighting is all important – strong but not glaring. Sunglasses will help on bright days.
- Consider wearing a hat with a brim. A white symbol cane can be useful for difficult times such as dim light.

## Living with Glaucoma (Continued)

- Colour contrast and magnifiers may help you see things easier  
- ask at your local Low Vision Assessment Clinic.
- A typoscope may help when reading to cut down on glare and help keep to the line.

- A typoscope may help.



**typoscope**

**For further information  
on the types of  
glaucoma:**

**Glaucoma UK**  
Woodcote House  
15 Highpoint -  
Business Village,  
Henwood, Ashford, Kent  
TN24 8DH

**T:** 01233 648170  
**W:** [glaucoma.uk](http://glaucoma.uk)

**For further information  
on lighting, equipment, or  
training available to you:**

**East Sussex Vision Support**  
13 Vicarage Field  
Hailsham  
East Sussex  
BN27 1BD

**T:** 01323 832252  
**E:** [info@eastsussexvisionsupport.org](mailto:info@eastsussexvisionsupport.org)  
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