

## **JANUARY: GLAUCOMA AWARENESS MONTH**

### ***Staying Fit is Good for Your Eyes***

According to The Glaucoma Foundation, exercise could provide an extra bonus if you are one of the 3 million Americans who have glaucoma, or among the many millions more who are at risk for developing the disease.

While the mainstay of glaucoma therapy remains lowering intraocular pressure (IOP) with medication, laser treatment or surgery, there is some evidence that a regular aerobic program can help support your medical therapy.

Numerous studies have looked at different types of dynamic aerobic exercise – bicycling, brisk walking, marathon running, jogging, swimming, gym conditioning – and determined that when exercise is intense, IOP falls substantially. The degree and duration of pressure reduction differs from study to study depending on the intensity and time span of the exercise. And the benefit continues only as long as you continue exercising. But even if you have been sedentary, simply going for a walk three or more times a week is a good start.

A few words of caution. Exercises in which you stand on your head or shoulders or invert your body – as in upside-down yoga positions, scuba diving and bungee jumping – should be avoided as they can raise IOP. Exercises in which you inhale and then hold your breath – such as weightlifting – appear to have a negative impact on IOP as well.

Also, some forms of glaucoma (such as closed angle) are not responsive to the effects of exercise and other types of the disease (such as pigmentary glaucoma) may develop a temporary increase in IOP after vigorous exercise. The bottom line: always check with your eye doctor and your general physician before starting any new exercise regime!

A final note: while drinking plenty of fluid is important before, during and after exercising, drink fluids slowly. Drinking a quart of water within 15 to 30 minutes can cause a rise in IOP. Use common sense as to how fast it goes down!

**Please call 703-827-5454 or 877-234-2020 to make an appointment with one of our doctors.**

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## **JANUARY: GLAUCOMA AWARENESS MONTH**

According to Prevent Blindness America, it has been estimated that over 4 million Americans have glaucoma, but only half of those know they have it. The Glaucoma Research Foundation has summarized four key facts about glaucoma:

### **GLAUCOMA IS A LEADING CAUSE OF BLINDNESS**

Glaucoma can cause blindness if it is left untreated. Unfortunately approximately 10% of people with glaucoma who receive proper treatment still experience loss of vision.

### **THERE IS NO CURE (YET) FOR GLAUCOMA**

Glaucoma is not curable, and vision lost cannot be regained. With medication and/or surgery, it is possible to halt further loss of vision. Since glaucoma is a chronic condition, it must be monitored for life. Diagnosis is the first step to preserving your vision.

### **EVERYONE IS AT RISK FOR GLAUCOMA**

Everyone is at risk for glaucoma from babies to senior citizens. Yes, older people are at a higher risk for glaucoma but babies can be born with glaucoma (approximately 1 out of every 10,000 babies born in the United States). Young adults can get glaucoma too. African-Americans in particular are susceptible at a younger age.

### **THERE MAY BE NO SYMPTOMS TO WARN YOU**

With open angle glaucoma, the most common form, there are virtually no symptoms. Usually, no pain is associated with increased eye pressure. Vision loss begins with peripheral or side vision. You may compensate for this unconsciously by turning your head to the side, and may not notice anything until significant vision is lost. The best way to protect your sight from glaucoma is to get tested. If you have glaucoma, treatment can begin immediately.

**See Clearly Vision and Cornea Consultants** include multiple medical practices that have served patients in the mid-Atlantic region for over ten years. We offer patients the following services:

- Advanced Cataract Surgery, including specialty lens implants
- All Laser LASIK/Custom LASIK, LASEK, PRK and CK
- Annual Eye Exams
- Botox and Juvéderm
- Contact Lenses - cosmetic and therapeutic fitting, including keratoconus
- Corneal Transplants
- Diabetes and Glaucoma Management
- Dry Eye Treatment
- Emergency On-Call Care

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