



This treatment plan is designed specifically for you. By reading and following these instructions carefully, you will gain a better understanding of your diagnosis and your treatment. It is indeed a pleasure to provide you with this reinforcement of my care.

#### **FAMILY HISTORY – GLAUCOMA (glah-KO-mah)**

The following explanation is especially for patients who have a close family history of glaucoma and/or for patients who have a special caution due to personal history, refractive considerations, or an anatomical predisposition.

Glaucoma is the cause of blindness in one out of seven people who have lost their sight. In fact, half of the people over age 35 who have glaucoma don't know it because it usually destroys eyesight without any pain. Glaucoma occurs when the body produces too much fluid or liquid inside the eye or when normal drainage of the fluid malfunctions. If glaucoma is present, pressure may increase within the eye. Higher than normal pressure causes damage to the highly sensitive optic nerve at the retina. Loss of sight may occur gradually or suddenly if glaucoma is not controlled. In the rare acute form of glaucoma, there is severe pain, headache, and nausea. In the more common chronic form, symptoms are rare and loss of sight occurs so gradually that the patient is not aware of any changes.

Early diagnosis is imperative. If glaucoma is discovered early, medical treatment usually keeps it from worsening. Regular medical eye exams are necessary to measure intra-ocular eye pressure, to evaluate the integrity of the optic nerve and to study a patient's peripheral field of vision. It is advised that persons having a family history of glaucoma or other factors indicating predisposition should be especially cautious.

#### **WHAT IS GLAUCOMA?**

Glaucoma is a group of diseases in which the pressure in the eye is higher than that particular eye can tolerate. A higher than normal pressure causes damage to the very sensitive optic nerve at the retina. Loss of sight may occur gradually or in rare cases, suddenly if glaucoma is not controlled.

In a rare form of glaucoma, acute glaucoma, there is severe pain, headache and nausea. In the more common chronic form, symptoms are rare and loss of sight occurs so gradually that the patient is not aware of any changes.

Glaucoma is the leading cause of blindness in people over age 40. Half the people who have glaucoma don't know it because it usually destroys eyesight without any symptoms of pain. Glaucoma occurs when the body produces too much fluid (aqueous humor) inside the eye or when normal drainage of the fluid does not filter out of the eye adequately.

Early diagnosis and treatment is imperative. If glaucoma is discovered early, treatment usually keeps it from getting worse. Regular eye exams are necessary to measure intra-ocular eye pressure, to evaluate the integrity of the optic nerve and to study a patient's peripheral field of vision. It is advised that persons having a family history of glaucoma or other factors indicating predisposition to the disease should be especially cautious.

This treatment plan is provided as an advanced level of service. If you have any questions after reading this report or if your condition does not improve, please contact my office immediately. Thank you for allowing me to participate in your care.