



# Parish Nurse corner

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Currently, around 4.22 million people in the United States have glaucoma, and nearly half are unaware of their condition.

Glaucoma is the leading cause of preventable blindness. Among African Americans and Latino populations, glaucoma is more prevalent - 6 to 8 times more common.

Approximately, 80 million people worldwide have glaucoma. Combined with our aging population, an epidemic of blindness is looming if we do not raise awareness about the importance of regular eye exams to preserve vision.

In the United States, approximately 120,000 are blind from glaucoma, accounting for 9% - 12% of all cases of blindness. Talk to friends and family about glaucoma, do not keep it a secret. Let family members know.

Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases that gradually steal sight without warning. There are no symptoms, and once vision is lost, it is permanent.

Vision loss is caused by damage to the optic nerve. This nerve acts like an electric cable with over a million wires. It is responsible for carrying images from the eye to the brain. Vision loss begins with peripheral or side vision, so if you have glaucoma you may not notice anything until significant vision, as much as 40%, is lost.

The best way to protect your sight is a comprehensive eye exam at least once a year. Then, if you have glaucoma, treatment (medication and/or surgery) can begin at once.

Are you at risk for glaucoma? People over 60, family members of those already diagnosed, diabetics, and people who are severely nearsighted have a significantly increased risk of having glaucoma.

There is no cure for glaucoma - yet. However, early detection and treatment can slow or prevent vision loss.

May God bless 'all of us' with His peace and joy and good health in 2026.

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