

Glaucoma Does Discriminate: Here's What You Need to Know to Protect Yourself

[Glaucoma](#) is one of the leading causes of vision loss, affecting about 3 million people in the United States.¹ But this potentially blinding eye disease does not affect all people equally. During Glaucoma Awareness Month in January Sabates Eye Centers is urging people to be screened, especially if you are at increased risk of glaucoma.

Who is at risk?

- African Americans are 6 to 8 times more likely to get glaucoma than white Americans. Blindness from glaucoma is 6 to 8 times more common in African Americans than white Americans.²
- People with diabetes are 2 times more likely to get glaucoma than people without diabetes.²
- Hispanic Americans face an increased risk comparable to African Americans, but the disease may also progress faster as they age, compared with other ethnic groups.³
- Asians are at an increased risk for the less common types of glaucoma: angle-closure glaucoma and normal-tension glaucoma.²
- Also at risk are people over age 40, those who are severely [nearsighted](#), and those who have a family history of glaucoma.

[Glaucoma](#) is a group of diseases that damages the eye's optic nerve. The optic nerve transmits visual information to the brain, allowing us to see. Because glaucoma often progresses slowly, affecting just peripheral or side vision, people with glaucoma can lose most of their vision before they even experience any [symptoms](#). Central vision, the vision used to read, drive or watch TV, is unaffected until the disease is advanced.

Just because you think you can see well, doesn't mean all is well. Once vision is lost to glaucoma, it can't be regained. That's why regular screening, especially among those at higher risk for glaucoma, is absolutely vital. When caught early, glaucoma can be treated with eyedrops or an in-office laser treatment. But in advanced cases, surgery may be required to slow the vision loss and prevent further damage."
