



**Best Practice Model for Patient Education on Glaucoma  
Cherry Street Health Services  
Cherry Street Vision Clinic**

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## Cherry Street Health Services

You have been diagnosed with glaucoma. It is important that you understand your condition because if not properly treated glaucoma can cause blindness. The following information is provided to help you understand what type of glaucoma you have and how your eye doctor will treat and monitor your condition. The eye care team at Cherry Street Vision Clinic will provide you with the best treatment available and will refer you to a trusted specialist if needed.

You can expect to see your eye doctor frequently for special testing and for eye pressure checks, usually every three months. This testing allows your doctor to decide if the medication is working for you. It is very important for you to come to these appointments! If you need to cancel or reschedule an appointment please call the office as soon as possible.

Also included in this packet is information on glaucoma medications (eye drops) and how to put the drops in your eyes. Please let your eye doctor know if you are having any unusual side effects that may be caused by the eye drops or if you are having a hard time getting them into your eye. It is very important to use all medications as directed by your eye doctor. If you run out of drops call your pharmacy immediately for a refill.

**It is very important for you to understand that no eye doctor can repair vision loss that has already occurred due to glaucoma. The goal of treatment is to prevent additional loss of vision.**

If you have any questions or concerns about glaucoma, your eye medication or any other vision problem, please call the Vision Clinic at (616) 235-7501.

## Types of Glaucoma

### **Primary Open Angle Glaucoma**

Primary open angle glaucoma occurs when the fluid naturally produced inside the eye cannot drain out of the eye fast enough. This happens even though there is nothing blocking the drain. It causes the pressure in the eye to be too high. This can cause nerve damage inside the eye and gradual, permanent loss of vision.

### **Angle Closure Glaucoma**

Angle closure glaucoma is caused when the colored part of the eye (the iris) blocks the fluid drain inside the eye and the fluid can not escape. Eye pressure becomes very high and can lead to pain and nausea. If left untreated, it can cause extreme damage to the eye. Angle closure glaucoma must be treated right away. Surgery may be required.

### **Narrow Angle Glaucoma**

Narrow angle glaucoma occurs when the colored part of the eye (the iris) partly blocks the fluid drain in the eye. When this happens, the fluid naturally produced inside the eye cannot drain out fast enough. It causes the pressure in the eye to be too high. This can cause nerve damage inside the eye and gradual, permanent loss of vision.

### **Normal Tension Glaucoma**

In normal tension glaucoma, the optic nerve is damaged even though pressure inside the eye is not very high. Doctors do not know what causes this type of glaucoma.

### **Pigmentary Glaucoma**

Pigmentary glaucoma is caused when pigment from the iris (the colored part of the eye) becomes loose and float in the fluid of the eye. The pigment collects in the part of the eye where fluid normally drains out. When this happens, the fluid naturally produced inside the eye cannot drain out fast enough. It causes the pressure in the eye to be too high. This can cause nerve damage inside the eye and gradual, permanent loss of vision.

### **Pseudoexfoliative Glaucoma**

Pseudoexfoliative glaucoma is caused when unusual, white deposits develop inside the eye behind the iris (colored part of the eye). These deposits become loose and float in the fluid of the eye. They collect in the part of the eye where fluid normally drains out. When this happens, the fluid naturally produced inside the eye cannot drain out fast enough. It causes the pressure in the eye to be too high. This can cause nerve damage inside the eye and gradual, permanent loss of vision.

## **Glaucoma Treatment**

- **Eye drops** For most people, glaucoma can be treated easily with eye drops. The drops are usually placed in one or both eyes once or twice a day. Some people may need more than one type of eye drop. You cannot stop using the eye drops. If you run out, you should immediately contact your eye doctor.
- **Surgery to the iris** A surgeon may perform surgery to the iris to allow fluid in the eye to get to the drain more easily. It works best for narrow angle glaucoma and angle closure glaucoma.
- **Surgery to the drain** A surgeon may perform laser surgery to the drain in the eye to open it wider. This allows fluid to drain out faster. This usually works better for people with open angle glaucoma.
- **Filtration surgery** In this surgery, a piece of the drain is removed creating a larger opening. It leaves a small bump on the white part of your eye where fluid can drain through instead of using the normal drain in the eye.

## Glaucoma Medications

### Beta Blockers

You must let your doctor know if you have asthma, emphysema, or heart problems before using these medications.

- Timoptic** (timolol maleate)

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- Istalol** (timolol maleate)

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- Cosopt** (dorzolamide hydrochloride  
-timolol maleate)

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### Carbonic Anhydrase Inhibitors

You must let your doctor know if you are taking oral carbonic anhydrase inhibitors (such as Diamox or Neptazane) before using these medications.

- Trusopt** (dorzolamide)

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- Cosopt** (dorzolamide hydrochloride  
-timolol maleate)

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### Alpha 2 Agonists

You must let your doctor know if you are taking an MAO inhibitor (such as Nardil, Marplan, Parnate, Eldepryl, and others) before using these medications.

- Alphagan P** (brimonidine tartrate)

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### Prostaglandin Analogs

These medications may cause your eye color to darken and eyelashes to grow longer and darker.

- Travatan** (travoprost)

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- Lumigan** (bimatoprost)

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- Xalatan** (latanoprost)

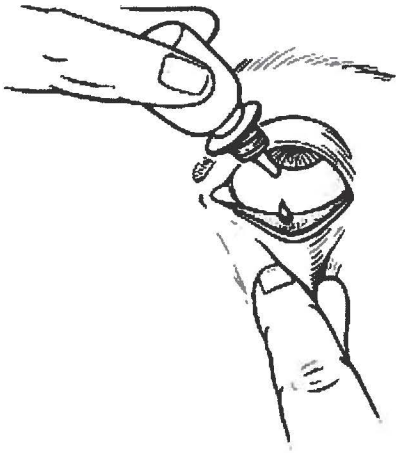
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## Eye drop Tips

- Be sure your doctor knows about any other drugs you may be taking (including over-the-counter items like vitamins, aspirin, and herbal supplements) and about any allergies you may have.
- Wash your hands before putting in your eye drops.
- Be careful not to let the tip of the dropper touch any part of your eye.
- Make sure the dropper stays clean.
- If you are putting in more than one drop or more than one type of eye drop, wait five minutes before putting the next drop in. This will keep the first drop from being washed out by the second before it has had time to work.
- Store eye drops and all medicines out of the reach of children.



## Steps for Putting In Eye Drops:

1. Start by tilting your head backward while sitting, standing, or lying down. With your index finger placed on the soft spot just below the lower lid, gently pull down to form a pocket.
2. Let a drop fall into the pocket.
3. Slowly let go of the lower lid. Close your eyes but try not to shut them tight or squint. This may push the drops out of your eye.
4. Gently press on the inside corner of your closed eyes with your index finger and thumb for two to three minutes. This will help keep any drops from getting into your system and keep them in your eye, where they are needed.
5. Blot around your eyes to remove any excess.

**Be sure to let your doctor know if you are having problems getting the drops in your eyes or if you are having excessive irritation from the medication.**



# Cherry Street Health Services

## **Glaucoma Treatment Contract**

Our goal is to control your glaucoma and to preserve your remaining vision. Your eye doctor cannot do this alone. It takes teamwork and YOU are an important member of the team. You and the eye care team at Cherry Street Vision Clinic will work together to develop a treatment plan that provides optimal care while being as simple and cost effective as possible to reduce the impact to your daily life.

### **As your eye care team we promise to:**

- Explain diseases, medications, treatments and tests in an “easy to understand” way.
- Listen to your concerns and answer your questions so that you can help make decisions about your care.
- Care for you to the best of our abilities with current treatment options
- Refer you to trusted experts if need
- End every visit with clear instructions about medications, treatment plans and follow-up visits.

### **We ask you to:**

- Use all medications as prescribed
- Keep all scheduled follow-up appointments. If you must reschedule call as soon as possible.
- Call us if you experience an adverse event from treatment or experience any new or worsening eye symptoms
- Be honest with us about how you are using your medications even if it is not as prescribed
- End every appointment with a clear understanding about medications, treatment plans and follow-up appointments. Please ask questions if you are not certain about any of these areas.

### **Discontinuing the Glaucoma Treatment Contract:**

We will be forced to stop treating your glaucoma or dismiss you from the Vision Clinic for any of the following reasons:



- If your condition is worsening despite our best treatment, we will need to refer you to a glaucoma specialist who will continue treating you.
- If you routinely do not use your medications as prescribed.
- If you do not keep scheduled follow-up appointments or violate the Cherry Street Vision Clinic no show policy.
- If you no show for an appointment with an eye care specialist outside of Cherry Street.

If you are dismissed from the Vision Clinic we will notify you of this in writing. If you choose to leave our practice please let us know and tell us why.

Thank You,  
Cherry Street Vision Clinic

I certify that I have received a copy of the Glaucoma Treatment Contract:

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Name

Date

