

Six things PCPs need to know about glaucoma

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(HealthDay)—Primary care physicians are in a position to help with

glaucoma diagnosis and management, according to an article published in the *Ophthalmology Times*.

Primary care providers should be aware of the scope of glaucoma, with about three million Americans having glaucoma, but only half being aware of it. As many patients do not schedule regular eye appointments, [primary care physicians](#) can play a role in identification of suspected glaucoma at an early stage. Symptoms include hazy vision, eye and head pain, nausea or vomiting, and sudden sight loss. Adults aged over 40, those of African, Asian, or Hispanic descent, and those with a [family history](#) are at increased risk.

The main types of glaucoma include open-angle glaucoma, which is the most common form, normal-tension glaucoma, angle-closure glaucoma, and secondary glaucoma. Medications are the first line of treatment but can be accompanied by side effects such as stinging or itching in the eyes, changes in pulse, or blurred vision. For patients who do not achieve adequate results with medication, surgery may be required, with options including trabeculectomy, laser trabeculoplasty, drainage tubes, ciliary ablation, and micro-invasive surgery.

"PCPs can help their patients by being alert to the symptoms and encouraging all patients to have regular dilated eye examinations," according to the report. "This is particularly important in [patients](#) who are over 60, who have a family history of [glaucoma](#), or who are of African, Asian, or Hispanic descent."

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