

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Sarah Hecker  
Prevent Blindness  
Phone: (312) 363-6035  
[shecker@preventblindness.org](mailto:shecker@preventblindness.org)

**Glaucoma, “The Sneak Thief of Sight,” Continues to Affect Vision of Millions of Americans**

***-- Prevent Blindness provides free resources to the public for January’s National Glaucoma Awareness Month --***

**CHICAGO (Dec. 26, 2019)** – According to estimates from the [Prevent Blindness](#) report, “[Future of Vision: Forecasting the Prevalence and Costs of Vision Problems.](#)” more than 3.2 million Americans ages 40 and over have glaucoma in the year 2020. The number is expected to increase as the population ages. Glaucoma, often referred to as the “The Sneak Thief of Sight,” is a leading cause of vision loss that damages the optic nerve. Although symptoms may not be noticeable at first, glaucoma slowly diminishes peripheral vision (side vision), making activities such as driving increasingly difficult.

January is National Glaucoma Awareness Month and Prevent Blindness, the nation’s oldest volunteer eye health and safety nonprofit organization, seeks to educate the public on the disease, including risk factors, types of glaucoma, treatment options and more. Prevent Blindness offers a dedicated web page providing patients and their caregivers with free information at <https://www.preventblindness.org/glaucoma> or its online resource, Living Well with Low Vision at <https://lowvision.preventblindness.org>.

More women than men have glaucoma. Risk factors for glaucoma also include:

- **Age-** The older you are, the greater you are at risk (especially those more than 60 years old).
- **Race-** African-Americans age 40 and over are 4-5 times more likely to have glaucoma than others. Hispanics are also at increased risk for glaucoma as they age. Those of Asian and Native American descent are at increased risk for angle closure glaucoma.
- **Family History-** If you have a direct relative with glaucoma, you are more likely to get glaucoma. If you are diagnosed with glaucoma, strongly encourage your family members to get complete eye exams.
- **Medical History-** You are at higher risk if you have a history of high pressure in the eyes, previous eye injury, long term steroid use, or are farsighted or nearsighted.

The [American Academy of Ophthalmology](#) (AAO) also states that those with diabetes, migraines, high blood pressure, poor blood circulation or other health problems affecting the whole body are at increased risk of glaucoma.

“The year 2020 is an ideal reminder for all of us to make the resolution today to save our vision for tomorrow,” said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “By detecting vision problems and treating them early, including those from glaucoma, we can help to avoid significant vision impairment.”

The AAO’s EyeCare America program provides eye care at no out-of-pocket cost to medically underserved seniors age 65 and older, and glaucoma exams to those at increased risk. For more information, visit <https://www.aao.org/eyecare-america>.

[Allergan](#) is supporting the efforts of Prevent Blindness in its public outreach efforts to protect vision from glaucoma. Allergan is a leading global pharmaceutical company with a more than 70-year heritage in eye care has launched over 125 eye care products and invested billions of dollars in treatments for the most prevalent eye conditions including glaucoma, ocular surface disease, and retinal diseases such as diabetic macular edema and retinal vein occlusion. Recently, Allergan launched the *My Glaucoma* campaign which is designed to help people understand the burden of living with glaucoma and empower those with the disease and their caregivers to feel comfortable speaking with their doctor about a treatment regimen that fits their lifestyle. For more information, visit [www.MyGlaucoma.com](http://www.MyGlaucoma.com).

For more information on glaucoma, or other financial assistance programs, [including Medicare coverage](#), please call Prevent Blindness at (800) 331-2020 or visit <https://www.preventblindness.org/glaucoma>.

### **About Prevent Blindness**

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-800-331-2020. Or, visit us on the Web at [preventblindness.org](http://preventblindness.org) or [facebook.com/preventblindness](https://facebook.com/preventblindness).

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