

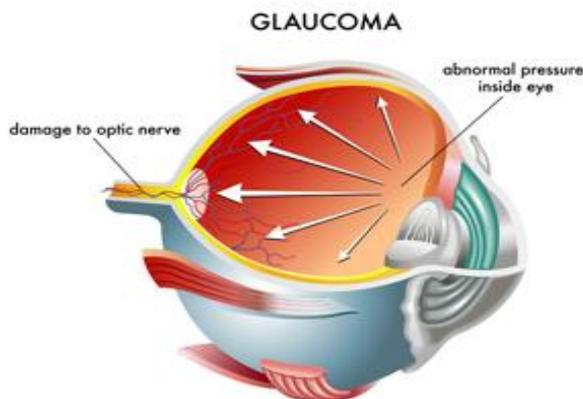


Dr Lim Eng Hock

What is the difference between a thief and a robber? A thief takes your property without your knowledge and you only realise your loss at a later time. A robber takes your property right in front of your eyes and you are immediately aware of your loss. Glaucoma is known as the “thief of sight” because it takes away your vision slowly and insidiously, so much so that by the time you realise your loss, it may be too late.

WHAT IS GLAUCOMA?

Glaucoma is a disease in which the internal pressure of the eye is too high, resulting in permanent damage to the main nerve of the eye (optic nerve). Untreated the condition invariably leads to complete, irreversible blindness.



About the Author.....



Dr Lim Eng Hock is a Senior Consultant at LEC and has been a vital member of the medical team since 2005. After completing his medical education at Mangalore University, Dr Lim began his internship in Hospital Ipoh. Dr Lim embarked on his Masters in Ophthalmology studies with University Hospital from June 1999 to Dec 2003. Currently, Dr. Lim is also a Visiting Consultant at Perak Community Specialist Hospital. Dr Lim is a very experienced and competent cataract and anterior segment surgeon and has performed thousands of eye surgeries including cataract surgeries with wavefront, toric and multifocal intra ocular lenses, pterygium excision with conjunctival graft using fibrin glue, trabeculectomy surgeries for glaucoma management and is also competent in squint surgery and eyelid surgery.

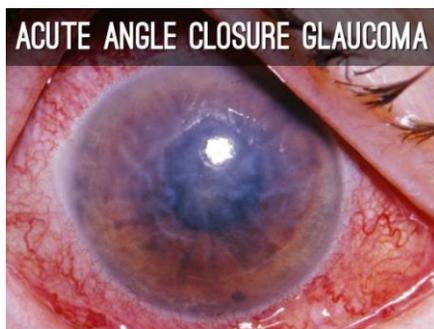
WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF GLAUCOMA?

Unfortunately, in most cases, there are no early warning symptoms of the disease. In glaucoma, usually the side (peripheral) vision is the first to be affected. Untreated, the disease relentlessly destroys all peripheral vision and only in its advanced or late stage does it start to affect the central vision.

It is for this reason that most cases of glaucoma are detected only in late or advanced stages as many people only perceive blurring of vision when the central vision has been affected. However, by this time, there is already extensive irreversible visual loss and treatment only serves to prevent further loss of vision.



A small percentage of glaucoma cases can present with more acute symptoms such as a sudden onset of blurring, eye pain and headache. In these cases medical attention is, of course, sought much earlier.



Sometimes, glaucoma may also occur secondary to other eye diseases such as cataract, eye inflammation or even due to severe diabetic eye disease.

WHO IS AT RISK FOR GLAUCOMA?

Glaucoma can affect any individual irrespective of age, gender or race. However, there are certain recognised factors for increased risk of the disease:

1. Increasing age.
2. Family history of glaucoma.
3. Diabetes.
4. Shortsightedness.
5. History of eye trauma or surgery.
6. Corticosteroid medications, especially eye drops.

MANAGEMENT OF GLAUCOMA

Most cases of glaucoma are not curable and treatment can only control and prevent worsening of vision. As such, treatment must be life-long.

Management of glaucoma usually entails application of eye drops to control the eye pressure in order to prevent further damage to the nerve of the eye. Testing of the function of the nerve at regular intervals is also mandatory to ensure that the disease is controlled well enough with no further loss of vision. Surgery may be required in severe cases where the eye pressure cannot be controlled satisfactorily with drops. Laser treatment may also be required in certain types of glaucoma.



IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

Glaucoma has no symptoms in its early or even intermediate stage. As the visual loss in glaucoma is irreversible, early detection by preventative eye examination is essential, especially if you have the above mentioned risk factors.



What is Allergic Conjunctivitis

When your eyes are exposed to substances like dust, pollen or mold spores, they may become red, itchy, and watery. These are symptoms of allergic conjunctivitis. Allergic conjunctivitis is an eye inflammation caused by an allergic reaction to substances like pollen or mold spores. The inside of your eyelids and the covering of your eyeball have a membrane called the conjunctiva. The conjunctiva is susceptible to irritation from allergens, especially during hay fever season. Allergic conjunctivitis is quite common. It's your body's reaction to substances it considers potentially harmful.

What are the types of allergic conjunctivitis?

Allergic conjunctivitis comes in two main types which are acute allergic conjunctivitis and chronic allergic conjunctivitis. Acute allergic conjunctivitis is a short-term condition that is more common during allergy season. Your eyelids suddenly swell, itch, and burn. You may also have a watery nose. Meanwhile chronic allergic conjunctivitis is a less common condition called chronic allergic conjunctivitis can occur year-round. It is a milder response to allergens like food, dust, and animal dander. Common symptoms come and go but include burning and itching of the eyes and light sensitivity.

What causes allergic conjunctivitis?

You experience allergic conjunctivitis when your body tries to defend itself against a perceived threat. It does this in reaction to things that trigger the release of histamine. Your body produces this potent chemical to fight off foreign invaders. Some of the substances that cause this reaction are:

- household dust pollen from trees and grass
- mold spores
- animal dander
- chemical scents such as household detergents or perfume

Some people may also experience allergic conjunctivitis in reaction to certain medications or substances dropped into the eyes, such as contact lens solution or medicated eye drops.

Who is at risk for allergic conjunctivitis?

People who have allergies are more likely to develop allergic conjunctivitis. According to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, allergies affect 30 percent of adults and 40 percent of children, and often run in families.

Allergies affect people of all ages, though they are more common in children and young adults. If you have allergies and live in locations with high pollen counts, you are more susceptible to allergic conjunctivitis.

What are the symptoms of allergic conjunctivitis?

Red, itchy, watery, and burning eyes are common symptoms of allergic conjunctivitis. You may also wake up in the morning with puffy eyes.

How is allergic conjunctivitis diagnosed?

Your doctor will examine your eyes and review your allergy history. Redness in the white of the eye and small bumps inside your eyelids are visible signs of conjunctivitis. Your doctor may also order one of the following tests:

1. An allergy skin test exposes your skin to specific allergens and allows your doctor to examine your body's reaction, which may include swelling and redness.
2. A blood test may be recommended to see if your body is producing proteins, or antibodies, to protect itself against specific allergens like mold or dust.
3. A scraping of your conjunctival tissue may be taken to examine your white blood cells. Eosinophils are white blood cells that become activated when you have allergies.

How is allergic conjunctivitis treated?

There are many treatment methods available for allergic conjunctivitis:

1. Home care

Treating allergic conjunctivitis at home involves a combination of prevention strategies and activities to ease your symptoms. To minimize your exposure to allergens:

- close windows when the pollen count is high
- keep your home dust-free
- use an indoor air purifier

- avoid exposure to harsh chemicals, dyes, and perfumes

To ease your symptoms, avoid rubbing your eyes. Applying a cool compress to your eyes can also help reduce inflammation and itching.

2. Medications

In more troublesome cases, home care may not be adequate. You will need to see a doctor who might recommend the following options:

- an oral or over-the-counter antihistamine to reduce or block histamine release
- anti-inflammatory or anti-inflammation eye drops
- eye drops to shrink congested blood vessels
- steroid eye drops

What is the long-term outlook?

With proper treatment, you can experience relief or at least reduce your symptoms. Recurring exposure to allergens, however, will likely trigger the same symptoms in the future.

How do I prevent allergic conjunctivitis?

Completely avoiding the environmental factors that cause allergic conjunctivitis can be difficult. The best thing you can do is to limit your exposure to these triggers. For example, if you know that you are allergic to perfume or household dust, you can try to minimize your exposure by using scent-free soaps and detergents. You may also consider installing an air purifier in your home.

Source:

<http://www.healthline.com/health/allergic-conjunctivitis#ReadThisNext0>

ACTIVITIES OF LEC

UTAR New Village Community Service with Free Eye Screening and Cultural Day at Kg Simee on 27th March 2016



Blindness Prevention Program Forum for Kuala Lumpur Kepong Bhd.'s employees on 21st April 2016



Emergency Contact: Perak Community Specialist Hospital: 05-2548918/05-2545949

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