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Glaucoma: Silent Thief of Sight

January is Glaucoma Awareness Month. It’s also the time of year we make positive resolutions to ourselves. Add a glaucoma screening to this year’s list.

You’re at a higher risk if you’re:

* Over the age of 65
* Very nearsighted
* African American
* Diabetic

Glaucoma is called the, “Silent Thief of Sight,” because you won’t notice or feel the onset of glaucoma until you start noticing an irreversible vision loss, or your eye doctor discovers an increase in your eye pressure. Because the vision loss happens slowly at the extreme edges of the visual field, it may go unnoticed until there is a significant vision loss. When was the last time you had a comprehensive eye exam from an ophthalmologist that included a glaucoma screening?

If diagnosed early, glaucoma is manageable with medication or minor surgery, and vision loss can be prevented or postponed. A typical comprehensive eye exam, may cost as little as $75-$125. How much is your eyesight worth to you and your family?

Other resources for eye exams include:

* Medicare may pay for an eye exam if you are in one of the high risk categories mentioned above.
* EyeCare America, on the web: www.aao.org/eyecare-america; or by phone at 877-887-6327, can provide adults at high risk an opportunity for a comprehensive eye exam at no out-of-pocket cost through their volunteer network of ophthalmologists!
* Contact your local Lions Club for eye care help and resources, or search their directory online at <https://directory.lionsclubs.org/>

If you’ve experienced a vision loss from glaucoma, be sure to find a vision rehabilitation therapist near you for training on adapted daily living and employment skills. You can find one at the VisionAware Directory of services at www.visionaware.org/directory.

Start 2020 off with your resolution to get a comprehensive eye exam that includes a glaucoma screening…no excuses!