

PREVENT VISION LOSS

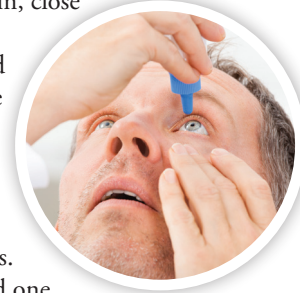
Glaucoma is a leading cause of irreversible blindness. When glaucoma is treated in its early stages, vision loss can be prevented. Yet studies show that more than half of people with glaucoma don't use their medications properly.



The American Academy of Ophthalmology offers this advice:

- **Be honest with your eye doctor about your medication difficulties.** Missed a dose? It may not seem to matter much, but research shows that skipping doses can cause your glaucoma to become more severe. Ask about the best way to make up for a missed dose and how to manage your medications.
- **Use memory aids.** The most common reason for not taking eye drops is forgetfulness. Try simple memory aids like linking your eye drop schedule to other things you do routinely such as brushing your teeth. Mark times you take your medication on a calendar. Set an alarm on your smartphone.

- **Perfect the “pocket.”** Giving yourself eye drops can be challenging. In fact, research has shown that nearly 30% of people taking glaucoma medication are not properly applying their eye drops. Gently pull and pinch the lower lid to make a pocket to catch your drops. Once the drops are in, close your eyes (do not blink) and apply pressure to the point where the lids meet the nose for 2 to 3 minutes. Maybe a loved one can help you apply the drops at home.



Who's at risk for developing glaucoma? Risk factors include age, family history of glaucoma, African-American and Hispanic-American ancestry, diabetes, and past eye injuries. The American Academy of Ophthalmology recommends that all people get an eye exam by age 40, especially those who have a higher risk of glaucoma.