

This material will help you understand ocular hypertension and how you can manage the condition.

## **What is ocular hypertension?**

Ocular hypertension occurs when the pressure inside the eye, also known as intraocular pressure (IOP), is higher than normal, or higher than 21 mmHg. Having high eye pressure puts you at risk for developing glaucoma, or damage to the optic nerve. The optic nerve is the electric cable that sends images from the eye to the brain so we can see. Eye pressure can play a role in damaging the sensitive nerve fibers that make up the optic nerve. Some people have high eye pressure and never develop any optic nerve damage. That is because in some people the optic nerve can tolerate a higher pressure than in others. Some people can even develop damage to their optic nerve, or glaucoma, at lower eye pressures. When someone has high eye pressure or ocular hypertension, s/he should be screened yearly to evaluate whether s/he are developing any early signs of glaucoma, but they may never need treatment.

## **What are the symptoms of ocular hypertension?**

Those with ocular hypertension rarely experience any symptoms. Most are not aware that they have ocular hypertension. An eye doctor is able to diagnose ocular hypertension with an eye exam.

## **How is ocular hypertension treated?**

Depending on your eye pressure, your eye doctor may decide to monitor your eye pressure and your optic nerve with regular testing. The testing usually occurs once or twice a year. If the eye pressure is doing damage or putting you at high risk of damaging your optic nerve, your doctor will prescribe eye drops to lower the eye pressure. Your eye doctor may also recommend a laser

treatment to lower the eye pressure. Your doctor will discuss which treatment option is best for you.

**For more information, scan these codes with your smartphone or visit the websites listed.**



<http://www.geteyesmart.org/eyesmart/diseases/ocular-hypertension.cfm>



<http://www.glaucoma.org/glaucoma/video-ocular-hypertension.php>

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