

## Common Symptoms of Glaucoma and When to Seek Help



Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of irreversible blindness — yet millions of people don't even know they have it. That's because the disease often starts silently, without pain or obvious symptoms. By the time most people notice something is wrong, permanent vision loss may have already occurred.

At **Vance Thompson Vision in Sioux Falls, SD**, we believe that education is your first line of defense. In this article, we'll walk you through the most common symptoms of glaucoma, explain why early detection matters, and help you understand when to seek expert care.

### **Why Symptoms Matter — and Why You Shouldn't Wait**

Glaucoma isn't just one condition — it's a group of diseases that damage the optic nerve, usually due to elevated pressure in the eye. Left untreated, this damage can lead to blind spots, tunnel vision, and eventually total vision loss.

What makes glaucoma particularly dangerous is that symptoms are usually absent in the early stages. That's why routine eye exams are critical — especially if you have risk factors (like age, family history, or diabetes).

Knowing what signs to watch for can help you take action before it's too late.

## **Early Glaucoma: The Silent Threat**

Most people with early-stage glaucoma — especially those with **primary open-angle glaucoma (POAG)** — don't feel or see anything unusual. The disease progresses slowly, damaging peripheral vision first. You might not even realize anything has changed until a large portion of vision is already lost.

That's why we call it the “silent thief of sight.”

## **Mid-to-Late Stage Symptoms of Glaucoma**

As glaucoma progresses, symptoms become more noticeable. These can include:

### **1. Loss of Peripheral Vision**

You may begin to miss things to the side while driving or walking. It may feel like you're looking through a tunnel.

### **2. Blurry Vision**

Your central vision might remain clear, but objects start to appear hazy or harder to focus on, especially in low light.

### **3. Halos Around Lights**

Particularly at night, you might notice rainbow-colored rings or halos around light sources.

### **4. Eye Pain or Pressure**

In more advanced or acute cases — like **angle-closure glaucoma** — patients may feel sudden eye pain or pressure.

### **5. Red Eyes**

If accompanied by pain, nausea, or blurred vision, this could be a sign of an emergency.

### **6. Nausea and Vomiting**

Often associated with a sudden spike in eye pressure (acute angle-closure glaucoma), this requires immediate medical attention.

## Acute Glaucoma Symptoms: A Medical Emergency

If you experience any of the following, seek emergency care right away:

- Sudden vision loss
- Severe eye pain
- Red eyes with blurred vision
- Nausea or vomiting with eye discomfort

These are hallmark signs of **acute angle-closure glaucoma**, a less common but rapidly progressing type that can cause permanent damage in hours if left untreated.

**Vance Thompson Vision in Sioux Falls, SD** is equipped to evaluate and manage urgent glaucoma cases. Don't wait — call us immediately if these symptoms occur.

## When Should You Get Checked for Glaucoma?

Even if you don't have symptoms, you may still be at risk. According to the **American Academy of Ophthalmology**, you should get a glaucoma screening if you:

- Are over **age 60**
- Have a **family history** of glaucoma
- Are **African American, Hispanic, or Asian**
- Have **diabetes, high blood pressure**, or are severely nearsighted
- Have experienced **eye injuries or prolonged steroid use**

Living in Sioux Falls, SD? Our glaucoma specialists at **Vance Thompson Vision** offer advanced screening tools and personalized follow-up to monitor your eye health over time.

## What Happens During a Glaucoma Evaluation?

We go beyond the basic eye exam. A glaucoma evaluation at **Vance Thompson Vision** includes:

- **Eye pressure check** (tonometry)
- **Visual field testing** (to detect blind spots)
- **Optical coherence tomography (OCT)** imaging (to view the optic nerve)
- **Corneal thickness measurement** (pachymetry)
- **Gonioscopy** (to examine the angle where fluid drains from the eye)

These tools allow us to detect glaucoma in its earliest stages — when treatment is most effective.

## How Quickly Does Glaucoma Progress?

The speed of glaucoma progression varies widely. **Primary open-angle glaucoma** may take years to cause significant damage, while **angle-closure glaucoma** can damage the optic nerve in hours.

With regular monitoring and the right treatment plan, we can slow or stop the progression of glaucoma — preserving your vision and independence.

## What to Do If You Notice Symptoms

If you're starting to notice any changes in your vision — even small ones — don't brush them off. The sooner glaucoma is diagnosed, the better the chance of preserving your sight.

Here's what to do:

1. **Schedule an eye exam** with a glaucoma specialist
2. **Note any risk factors** you may have
3. **Monitor your vision** closely — especially peripheral vision
4. **Follow through with recommended follow-ups and treatments**

# Why Choose Vance Thompson Vision for Glaucoma in Sioux Falls, SD?

At **Vance Thompson Vision**, we offer:

- Advanced diagnostic technology that detects glaucoma early
- Fellowship-trained glaucoma specialists with deep expertise
- Customized treatment plans based on your individual condition
- A patient-first, education-forward approach
- Local convenience for residents of Sioux Falls and Southwest South Dakota

You deserve a team that sees the whole picture — not just your symptoms.

## Call to Action: Take Control of Your Eye Health Today

If you've noticed changes in your vision — or if you're simply due for an eye exam — don't delay. Glaucoma may be silent, but it's not invisible to the right team.

**Schedule your glaucoma evaluation today at Vance Thompson Vision in Sioux Falls, SD.**

## Company Description

Vance Thompson Vision Sioux Falls takes pride in being world leaders in quality vision correction and setting global standards for excellent patient care in ophthalmology. We specialize in many forms of vision surgery and treatment with a specific focus on LASIK, refractive cataract surgery, glaucoma, cornea care, and oculoplastics.

## Contact Details

Vance Thompson Vision - Sioux Falls  
3101 W 57th St, Sioux Falls, SD 57108  
(319) 362-9855

Website: <https://www.vancethompsonvision.com/locations/sioux-falls/>

Google Site: <https://sites.google.com/view/vancethompsonvision/location/glaucoma-sioux-falls/>

Google Folder: [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/129vWvmuKZumgZWWNqFP2WICXAiPsmGB5?usp=drive\\_open](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/129vWvmuKZumgZWWNqFP2WICXAiPsmGB5?usp=drive_open)

## Recommended Resources

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<https://mgyb.co/s/eiATc>  
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<https://mgyb.co/s/WGHjQ>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/YwdoK>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/bgrTF>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/NkgeP>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/QDXln>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/wEjWi>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/DaRQD>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/diHyX>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/xxaHv>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/vWFWv>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/Jxdmt>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/bCuiD>  
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<https://mgyb.co/s/shRUf>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/qxYfS>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/MGUkq>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/vdzyB>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/npAXt>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/PcOjS>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/VcJzZ>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/COxqi>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/sKtKr>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/Cjjaw>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/xQtXQ>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/yxJqv>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/wLPCQ>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/eZKsf>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/iACrd>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/apVKV>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/Thcgn>  
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<https://mgyb.co/s/hfrcz>  
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<https://mgyb.co/s/aBaIM>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/gbvbf>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/LKMDL>  
<https://mgyb.co/s/zYonC>

<https://mgyb.co/s/MQbrX>

<https://mgyb.co/s/qkaUB>

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[Glaucoma Eye Doctor](#)

[Glaucoma Laser Surgery](#)

[Glaucoma Treatment Options](#)

[Glaucoma Pressure Test](#)

[Open Angle Glaucoma](#)

[Narrow Angle Glaucoma](#)

[How Is Glaucoma Treated](#)

[Glaucoma Medication](#)

[Best Glaucoma Doctors](#)

[Glaucoma Vision Loss](#)

[Early Signs Of Glaucoma](#)

[Glaucoma Eye Pressure](#)

[Glaucoma Screening Test](#)

[Glaucoma Test Sioux Falls](#)

[Sioux Falls Glaucoma Clinic](#)

[Best Glaucoma Treatment](#)

[Glaucoma Laser Surgery](#)

[Open Angle Glaucoma Treatment](#)

[Narrow Angle Glaucoma Surgery](#)

[Glaucoma Medication Options](#)

[Glaucoma Pressure Test](#)

[Early Signs Of Glaucoma](#)

[Glaucoma Vision Loss Prevention](#)

[Vance Thompson Vision Glaucoma Treatment](#)

[Vance Thompson Vision Glaucoma Surgery](#)

[Vance Thompson Vision Glaucoma Specialist](#)

[Vance Thompson Vision Glaucoma Doctor](#)

[Vance Thompson Vision Glaucoma Clinic](#)

[Vance Thompson Vision Migs Glaucoma](#)

[Vance Thompson Vision Slt Laser](#)

[Vance Thompson Vision Glaucoma Consultation](#)

[Vance Thompson Vision Glaucoma Cost](#)  
[Vance Thompson Vision Glaucoma Patient Reviews](#)  
[Schedule Vance Thompson Vision Glaucoma Exam](#)  
[Vance Thompson Vision Glaucoma Implant Surgery](#)  
[Vance Thompson Vision Glaucoma Second Opinion](#)  
[Vance Thompson Vision Advanced Glaucoma Care](#)  
[Vance Thompson Vision Sioux Falls Glaucoma](#)  
[Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty](#)  
[Migs Glaucoma Surgery](#)  
[Glaucoma Eye Drops](#)  
[Glaucoma Diagnosis](#)  
[Glaucoma Monitoring](#)  
[Glaucoma Management Plan](#)  
[Glaucoma Causes](#)  
[Glaucoma Symptoms](#)  
[What Is Glaucoma](#)  
[Can Glaucoma Be Cured](#)  
[Glaucoma Risk Factors](#)  
[Glaucoma Eye Pressure](#)  
[Normal Tension Glaucoma](#)  
[Angle Closure Glaucoma](#)  
[Pigmentary Glaucoma](#)  
[Glaucoma Epidemiology](#)  
[Juvenile Glaucoma](#)  
[Congenital Glaucoma](#)  
[Hypertensive Eye Disease](#)  
[Optic Nerve Damage From Glaucoma](#)  
[Peripheral Vision Loss](#)  
[High Eye Pressure](#)  
[Visual Field Test Glaucoma](#)  
[Optical Coherence Tomography Glaucoma](#)  
[Glaucoma Screening Guidelines](#)  
[Glaucoma Staging](#)  
[Glaucoma Progression](#)  
[Lowering Eye Pressure](#)  
[Drops For Intraocular Pressure](#)  
[Glaucoma Medication Side Effects](#)  
[Beta Blocker Eye Drops](#)  
[Prostaglandin Analogues Glaucoma](#)  
[Glaucoma Surgery Risks](#)  
[Glaucoma Surgery Recovery](#)  
[Trabeculectomy Procedure](#)  
[Tube Shunt Surgery Glaucoma](#)  
[Micro Invasive Glaucoma Surgery](#)  
[Glaucoma Implant Devices](#)  
[Hydrus Microstent](#)

[Istent Inject Glaucoma](#)  
[Cyclophotocoagulation](#)  
[Goniotomy For Glaucoma](#)  
[Endoscopic Cyclophotocoagulation](#)  
[Glaucoma Laser Trabeculoplasty](#)  
[Slit Versus Alt](#)  
[Glaucoma Laser Therapy Cost](#)  
[Glaucoma Treatment Success Rates](#)  
[Glaucoma Outcomes Statistics](#)  
[Glaucoma Patient Stories](#)  
[Glaucoma Forums](#)  
[Support Groups For Glaucoma](#)  
[Lifestyle Changes For Glaucoma](#)  
[Diet For Eye Pressure](#)  
[Exercise For Glaucoma](#)  
[Manage Glaucoma Naturally](#)  
[Herbal Supplements For Eye Pressure](#)  
[Glaucoma Monitoring Devices](#)  
[Home Tonometer Device](#)  
[Glaucoma App For Iphone](#)  
[Virtual Glaucoma Consultation](#)  
[Telemedicine Glaucoma Exam](#)  
[Ai Glaucoma Detection](#)  
[Wearable Eye Pressure Sensor](#)  
[Blue Light And Glaucoma](#)  
[Sleep Position And Eye Pressure](#)  
[Yoga Inversion Glaucoma Risk](#)  
[Caffeine And Eye Pressure](#)  
[Smoking And Glaucoma](#)  
[Glaucoma Versus Cataracts](#)  
[Glaucoma Vs Macular Degeneration](#)  
[Laser Cataract Vs Glaucoma Treatment](#)  
[Glaucoma Filters Surgery Vs Stent](#)  
[Glaucoma Follow Up Schedule](#)  
[Glaucoma Appointment Checklist](#)  
[How To Prepare For Glaucoma Surgery](#)  
[Driving After Glaucoma Surgery](#)  
[Working After Glaucoma Surgery](#)  
[Eye Makeup After Glaucoma Surgery](#)  
[Glaucoma Surgery Anesthesia](#)  
[Glaucoma Surgery Success Stories](#)  
[Glaucoma Surgery Video](#)  
[Glaucoma Treatment Clinical Trials](#)  
[New Glaucoma Medications 2025](#)  
[Latest Glaucoma Research](#)  
[Fda Approved Glaucoma Devices](#)

[Preserve Vision With Glaucoma](#)  
[Stop Glaucoma Progression](#)  
[Gene Therapy For Glaucoma](#)  
[Stem Cell Therapy Glaucoma](#)  
[Laser Vs Drops Glaucoma](#)  
[Drops Vs Surgery Glaucoma](#)  
[Migs Vs Trabeculectomy](#)  
[Glaucoma Surgery Cost With Insurance](#)  
[Glaucoma Treatment Financing](#)  
[Carecredit Glaucoma Surgery](#)  
[Medicare Coverage Glaucoma Surgery](#)  
[Glaucoma Treatment Without Insurance](#)  
[Average Cost Of Glaucoma Treatment](#)  
[Affordable Glaucoma Care](#)  
[Charity Programs For Glaucoma](#)  
[Second Opinion Glaucoma Diagnosis](#)  
[Glaucoma Clinical Trial Enrollment](#)  
[Best Hospital For Glaucoma](#)  
[Top Glaucoma Surgeons Usa](#)  
[National Glaucoma Foundation](#)  
[Glaucoma Awareness Month](#)  
[World Glaucoma Day](#)  
[Questions To Ask Glaucoma Specialist](#)  
[Glaucoma Patient Education](#)  
[Brochure On Glaucoma](#)  
[Glaucoma Resource Center](#)  
[Glaucoma Faqs](#)  
[Glaucoma Printable Checklist](#)  
[Glaucoma Risk Assessment Tool](#)  
[Inheritance Of Glaucoma](#)  
[Family Screening For Glaucoma](#)  
[Genetic Testing Glaucoma](#)  
[Pets Glaucoma In Dogs](#)  
[Ocular Hypertension Vs Glaucoma](#)  
[Pachymetry Test](#)  
[Gonioscopy Exam](#)  
[Visual Acuity Vs Glaucoma](#)  
[Glaucoma Specialist Sioux Falls](#)  
[Sioux Falls Glaucoma Specialist](#)  
[Glaucoma Surgery Sioux Falls](#)  
[Sioux Falls Glaucoma Surgery Cost](#)  
[Glaucoma Treatment Sioux Falls](#)  
[Sioux Falls Glaucoma Treatment Center](#)  
[Best Glaucoma Doctor Sioux Falls](#)  
[Glaucoma Clinic Sioux Falls Sd](#)  
[South Dakota Glaucoma Specialist](#)

[Minimally Invasive Glaucoma Surgery Sioux Falls](#)  
[Glaucoma Eye Exam Sioux Falls](#)  
[Sioux Falls Glaucoma Eye Exam](#)  
[Glaucoma Consultation Sioux Falls](#)  
[Schedule Glaucoma Consultation Sioux Falls](#)  
[Glaucoma Diagnosis Sioux Falls](#)  
[Glaucoma Laser Therapy Sioux Falls](#)  
[Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty Sioux Falls](#)  
[Trabeculectomy Sioux Falls](#)  
[Tube Shunt Glaucoma Surgery Sioux Falls](#)  
[Glaucoma Management Sioux Falls](#)  
[Manage Glaucoma Sioux Falls](#)  
[Glaucoma Monitoring Sioux Falls](#)  
[Sioux Falls Glaucoma Monitoring](#)  
[Optic Nerve Scan Sioux Falls](#)  
[Sioux Falls Optic Nerve Imaging](#)  
[Sioux Falls Intraocular Pressure Test](#)  
[Eye Pressure Test Sioux Falls](#)  
[Glaucoma Support Group Sioux Falls](#)  
[Glaucoma Awareness Sioux Falls](#)  
[Glaucoma Symptoms Sioux Falls](#)  
[Glaucoma Specialist South Dakota](#)  
[South Dakota Glaucoma Surgery](#)  
[Glaucoma Treatment South Dakota](#)  
[South Dakota Glaucoma Clinic](#)  
[Best Glaucoma Surgeon South Dakota](#)  
[Glaucoma Eye Exam South Dakota](#)  
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[Glaucoma Surgery Financing South Dakota](#)  
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[Find Glaucoma Doctor South Dakota](#)  
[Glaucoma Appointment South Dakota](#)  
[Emergency Glaucoma Care South Dakota](#)  
[Glaucoma Therapy South Dakota](#)  
[Glaucoma Charity Program South Dakota](#)  
[Glaucoma Second Opinion South Dakota](#)  
[Glaucoma Research South Dakota Usa](#)  
[Migs Glaucoma Surgery South Dakota](#)  
[Glaucoma Eye Drops Sioux Falls](#)  
[Sioux Falls Glaucoma Cost Consultation](#)  
[Glaucoma Laser Sioux Falls Sd](#)  
[Sioux Falls Pressure Lowering Surgery](#)  
[South Dakota Glaucoma Awareness Month Event](#)