

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 Alexandria, MN**, 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 Alexandria, MN 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 Alexandria, MN? 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 Alexandria, MN?

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 Alexandria and Southwest Minnesota

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 Alexandria, MN.

Company Description

Vance Thompson Vision Alexandria 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 - Alexandria

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(320) 762-2166

Website: <https://www.vancethompsonvision.com/locations/alexandria/>

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

Google Folder: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1mq3Ywbt7C2FkiOsm5xrsFzkAhucyexd?usp=drive_open

Recommended Resources

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

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

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

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

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Recommended Profiles

<https://www.facebook.com/VTVAlexandriaMN/>
<https://www.vancethompsonvision.com/services/glaucoma>
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