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Primary Open-Angle Glaucoma (POAG - Chronic)

The most common form of glaucoma is chronic or primary open-angle glaucoma (POAG) and is characterized by a slow increase in intraocular pressure (IOP) without symptoms of pain or pressure.



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Mechanism

Flow of Aqueous Humor Slowed

Water from Eye-fountain Slowed

This reduced outflow or stoppage of aqueous humor by obstruction leads to a slow increase in IOP. Due to a decreased trabecular meshwork, drainage channels will clog, thus increasing intraocular pressure. Ultimately, there will be damage to the optic nerve and eventual blindness.

Signs and Symptoms

Slow Onset

Snail On-switch

POAG has a slow onset unlike its counterpart primary angle-closure glaucoma (PACG) which has a rapid onset. The patient may not notice the gradual visual field loss until peripheral vision has been largely compromised.

No Pain

No Pain-sign

The patient does not experience any pain in POAG.

Tunnel Vision

Tunnel View

Untreated glaucoma leads to tunnel vision, which is the loss of peripheral vision and only a small center visual area field can be seen.

IOP 22-32mm Hg

Eye-squeezing (2)(2) Tutus to (3) Tree (2) Tutu

The normal range for IOP is between 10 to 21 mm Hg, but those with open-angle glaucoma typically have an elevated IOP reading between 22 to 32 mm Hg.

Considerations

Drug Therapy

Med-bottle

While drugs do not cure glaucoma, they can help control symptoms. Several options exist including miotics, beta adrenergic blockers, alpha adrenergic agonists, and systemic carbonic anhydrase inhibitors.