

# Glaucoma: Complementary/Alternative Medicine

## ACUTE GLAUCOMA

Increased pressure within the eye (intraocular), usually on one side only  
Severe throbbing pain in eye with markedly blurred vision  
Pupil moderately dilated and fixed  
Nausea and vomiting is common

## CHRONIC GLAUCOMA

Persistent elevation of the pressure within the eye (increased intraocular pressure)  
Usually no symptoms are apparent in the early stages

Gradual loss of peripheral vision resulting in tunnel vision

## QUICK REVIEW

Glaucoma is a major cause of blindness in adults.

Treatment and prevention of both acute and chronic glaucoma is dependent upon:

- reduction of intraocular pressure, and
- improvement of collagen metabolism within the eye. Magnesium supplementation lowers intraocular pressure.

## TREATMENT SUMMARY

Acute glaucoma is a medical emergency. If you are showing any signs of glaucoma, consult an ophthalmologist immediately. Typical signs and symptoms include extreme pain, blurring of vision, reddened eyes, and a fixed and dilated pupil. Unless adequately treated within twelve to forty-eight hours, an individual with acute glaucoma will become permanently blind within two to five days.

## Diet

A generally healthful diet is recommended, with a focus on foods high in vitamin C and flavonoids, such as fresh fruits and vegetables. In addition, regular consumption of cold-water fish (e.g. salmon, mackerel, herring, and halibut) is also encouraged due to their high content of omega-3 fatty acids.

## Nutritional Supplements

- Vitamin C: minimum of 2,000 mg per day in divided doses (effective dosage may be as high as 35 g per day)
- Bioflavonoids (mixed): 1,000 mg per day
- Magnesium: 200 to 600 mg per day
- Chromium: 200 to 400 mcg per day
- Flaxseed oil: One tablespoon daily

## Botanical Medicines

- Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) extract (25% anthocyanidin content): 80 mg three times per day
- *Ginkgo biloba* extract (24% ginkgo flavonglycosides): 40 to 80 mg three times daily