

# PREVENT GLAUCOMA NATURALLY

3 sight-saving nutrients  
you can count on

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Sight is one of our most valuable senses. Not only does it allow us to experience the physical beauty of the world around us, it also plays a major role in keeping our bodies safe from harm. Unfortunately, aging, poor dietary habits, and other factors can wreak havoc on our eyes, causing a number of possible issues, including cataracts, macular degeneration, and glaucoma. The last of these, glaucoma, is a leading cause of blindness and affects more than three million Americans.

## WHAT IS GLAUCOMA?

When your eyes are healthy, they produce and drain fluid at equal rates. If the fluid is unable to drain properly, pressure—known as increased



ocular pressure, or IOP—builds up inside the eye and adversely affects the optic nerve, retina, and lens. Over time, this pressure can damage or even destroy the retina and optic nerve, leading to permanent vision loss.

There are several types of glaucoma, with the two main types being open-angle and acute angle-closure glaucoma. Open-angle glaucoma is the most common, making up at least 90 percent of all glaucoma cases. While this type of the disease often develops slowly with a gradual loss of peripheral vision, acute angle-closure glaucoma is a medical emergency that requires immediate medical attention.

Symptoms of acute glaucoma include severe eye pain, blurred vision, seeing halos around lights, and nausea and vomiting.

Regardless of the type of glaucoma, this degenerative eye disease is nothing to take lightly, making it even more important to get comprehensive yearly eye exams.

## PRESERVE EYE SIGHT NATURALLY

While it's nearly impossible to pinpoint the cause of glaucoma, research has shown that one of the major contributors is free-radical damage, also known as oxidative stress. This process causes an imbalance between free radicals and antioxidants in the body. In order to fight oxidative stress, it's important to increase your intake of antioxidants. When it comes to eye health, and glaucoma in particular, the three best weapons in your arsenal against vision loss are omega-3 fatty acids, French grape seed extract, and an extremely powerful antioxidant called glutathione.



### OMEGA-3S

Most people are aware of the amazing things omega-3s can do for heart and brain health, but they may not know just how beneficial they can be in maintaining healthy eyesight. DHA, one of three forms of omega-3 fatty acids, may be particularly useful in fighting age-related vision issues. This is because DHA makes up more than one-third of the fatty acids present in the retina of the eye. One study published in the journal *JAMA Ophthalmology* analyzed the association between glaucoma and daily dietary intake of polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs) like canola, cottonseed, or other seed oils. Results show that the increased dietary consumption of DHA and another type of omega-3 called EPA were associated with a lower likelihood of glaucoma, while increased consumption of PUFAs were related to a higher risk of glaucoma.

While eating more wild salmon and tuna is a great way to boost your omega-3 intake, research has also shown that taking omega-3 supplements on a daily basis can help reverse age-related eye disorders. In an Australian study, researchers were able to show that supplementing with omega-3s for three months significantly decreased intraocular pressure.

### FRENCH GRAPE SEED EXTRACT

Grape seed extract is another gift from nature that can greatly benefit eye health. This nutrient contains powerful anti-inflammatory and antioxidant compounds called oligomeric proanthocyanidins (OPCs), which prevent the damage caused by oxidative stress. Studies have shown that grape seed extract can protect neurons and nerve cells, including the retinal ganglion cells (RGCs) located near the inner surface of the eye's retina. Once glaucoma causes RGCs to die, these cells can never be replaced.

Being proactive by taking a French grape seed extract can boost antioxidant levels throughout your body and reduce the chances of RGC damage. Keep in mind that, while there are many grape seed extract supplements on the market, not all are created equal. A tannin-free french grape seed extract with small, easily absorbable OPCs, is the most beneficial. Look for a French grape seed extract that has been studied to be safe and effective for a variety of health needs.



### GLUTATHIONE

Glutathione is a naturally occurring, extremely powerful antioxidant that is present in every cell in the body. High levels of this powerful nutrient are associated with good health and longevity, while depleted levels lead to a number of diseases, including glaucoma. Growing older and taking certain medications (like acetaminophen) can deplete the levels of glutathione in your body.

Often referred to as “the mother of all antioxidants,” glutathione also boosts and prolongs the beneficial activity of other antioxidants in the body, including eye-supporting vitamins C and E. You can increase your levels of glutathione with an oral supplement, but choose wisely. Glutathione is known to lose its powers with digestion. Once it becomes oxidized, it adds to the body's oxidative stress burden. In order to benefit from this important nutrient, look for a reduced glutathione supplement in the form of a stable, slow melt tablet. This active, patent-protected system ensures that the glutathione survives the digestive process. In a published human study, this form of glutathione achieved a 230 percent improvement in healthy glutathione ratios compared to unprotected glutathione.

While these three nutrients can support healthy vision and may help to prevent glaucoma, it's important to see your physician and undergo annual testing. If you are diagnosed with glaucoma or other serious condition, work with your health care provider for the appropriate treatment. ■