



AGS

American Glaucoma Society

*Presents an educational luncheon briefing
and screening, being held on the first-ever
World Glaucoma Day*

“Glaucoma: Awareness and Early Detection Can Prevent Blindness”

Featuring Real-time Optic Nerve and
Pressure Evaluation of the Eye

Thursday, March 6, 2008

11:30 am – 1:30 pm

House Rayburn B-369

Please R.S.V.P. to
Dina Beaumont @ 202-530-4672 or dinabeau@aol.com

**Note: AGS is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Educational Foundation hosting
this widely attended event with meal value less than \$50**

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What is the focus of this briefing?

As March 6 is the first-ever World Glaucoma Day, the AGS is educating Capitol Hill about glaucoma, the second leading cause of preventable vision loss in the United States. It is a group of diseases that damages the optic nerve and leads to vision loss. An estimated 2.2 million Americans have glaucoma, and an additional two million do not know they have it, as it often has no symptoms until vision loss occurs. If untreated, it leads to blindness, which has occurred in 120,000 Americans. Worldwide, nearly 70 million people are affected by it.

Every American over the age of 60 is at risk of developing glaucoma, which also disproportionately affects minority populations. African Americans have a three times greater risk of developing this disease than white Americans, and it is the leading cause of irreversible vision loss in both African Americans and Hispanics.

Why is awareness and early detection important?

Diagnosis and treatment of glaucoma can avoid blindness in 90 percent of the cases. Awareness is crucial, so that individuals with known risk factors for glaucoma—those over the age of 40, especially African Americans and Hispanics, as well as anyone with a family history of the disease—should have regular, comprehensive eye examinations that include careful evaluation of the optic nerve and measurement of eye pressure. If detected early, disease progression often can be stopped or slowed with eye drops or surgery, as demonstrated through research funded by the National Eye Institute (NEI) within the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The NEI currently supports 244 research studies, spending \$60 million annually, into glaucoma diagnosis and treatment. However, with the aging of the population, especially at-risk minorities, the NEI faces an enormous challenge in preventing blindness and vision loss associated with glaucoma which can reduce productivity, limit independence, and diminish quality of life.

About the Screenings...

After a welcome by AGS President Robert N. Weinreb, M.D. (Hamilton Glaucoma Center/University of California, San Diego), attendees will have access to a number of screening devices that evaluate the optic nerve and measure eye pressure. AGS wishes to thank Carl Zeiss Meditec, Inc., Heidelberg Engineering, Reichert, Inc., and Ziemer Ophthalmology for providing the screening instruments.

About the American Glaucoma Society...

The American Glaucoma Society (AGS) is a 501(c)3 non-profit foundation dedicated to promote excellence in the care of patients with glaucoma and preserve or enhance vision by supporting glaucoma specialists and scientists through the advancement of education and research. AGS is pleased to host this widely attended event, with a meal value of less than \$50.