

Contract for Care: Glaucoma

1. **MY RESPONSIBILITY** as your doctor:

HELP YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR DISEASE AND MONITOR FOR CHANGE. There is physical damage to your optic nerve. The optic nerve is the cable that sends information from your retina (seeing tissue) to your brain. Every eye has an optimal healthy range of pressure. Your eye pressure can go above this range and cause damage; eye pressure will be monitored at each visit. Photos of the inside structures of your eye and OCT images show you what I saw to help me diagnose glaucoma. The visual field test shows both of us what YOU saw--or missed--at this point in time because of glaucoma. MY responsibility to you will be to periodically repeat these measures to monitor whether or not there is progressive damage. Trust that this technology is very specific even though changes are subtle.

It's established that your optic nerve has been affected by a disease that has NO CURE. Another part of my responsibility to you is that I will:

DISCUSS TREATMENT OPTIONS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON FINDINGS. These recommendations will be tailored to how your disease progresses, so there may be changes in treatment. You will be made aware of any progression of vision loss that shows up through monitoring even if you have not noticed change. Care may require co-management with other specialists.

2. **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** in keeping your vision:

BE INVOLVED IN YOUR CARE. Ask questions. The more you know about what you're treating and *what happens if you elect not to treat*, the better chance there is that you'll keep the vision you have. Volunteer information--if you're having trouble with something related to how you see, or the way your eyes feel, let me know. I will never see through your eyes!

USE YOUR EYE DROPS EVERYDAY FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE UNTIL THE EYE DOCTOR MONITORING YOU TELLS YOU TO STOP. Everyday. The way they were prescribed. For the rest of your life. These eye drops won't make you see better, so don't expect that. They won't make your eyes feel better. In fact, they may irritate your eyes at first. These drops help bring your eye pressure back into a healthy range so that damage to your optic nerve is arrested.

GLAUCOMA DOESN'T GO AWAY. Every day you don't use the drop that halts vision loss, you risk losing vision the very next day. You can't get back what glaucoma takes away. *It's my job to make you understand this so that you will know why you can't stop treatment. It's your job to do use the drops.*

KEEP YOUR APPOINTMENTS. Monitoring your eye health now that a sight-threatening disease is being treated will require that you come to the office more than once a year. I will schedule you at regular intervals to repeat tests that let us know how effective your treatment is. Each visit will be an opportunity for you to know that vision loss is not progressing. If adjustments need to be made, we can make changes in a timely manner, and not let vision loss progress.

