



**TOTAL EYE CARE**  
**BERTRAM KRAFT, MD**

**Dear Total Eye Care Patient,**

Everyone at Dr. Bertram Kraft's Total Eye Care wants to wish you and your family a healthy and joyous holiday season! This is the first of a bimonthly newsletter that I will be circulating to inform you of the latest recommendations for improving the health of your eyes and special discounts that Total Eye Care will offer to readers of this newsletter. I am certain that you will find the six newsletters I will send each year educational and interesting.

Glaucoma is an eye disease that can affect anyone at any age and, if left untreated, will lead to blindness. Most cases of open angle glaucoma (the most common type) have virtually no symptoms until very late stages of the disease. Glaucoma gives no early warning signs of potential vision loss and by the time you realize that you are losing your eyesight, the vision you have already lost is gone forever.

**Did You Know That January is National Glaucoma Awareness Month?**

Glaucoma affects 3 to 4 million people in the United States and, sadly, it is estimated that only half of those people are aware that they have glaucoma. Glaucoma is the world's second-leading cause of blindness according to the World Health Organization. In the United States, glaucoma is the leading cause of blindness in African-American and Hispanic populations.

**What is Glaucoma—the “Sneak Thief of Sight”?**

Glaucoma is a group of diseases that damage the eye's optic nerve and result in vision loss and blindness. With early detection and treatment, you can usually protect your eyes against serious vision loss. Glaucoma occurs when the fluid pressure inside the eye rises. The increased pressure damages the optic nerve cells. Nerve cells in the eye, once damaged, cannot repair themselves so any vision loss due to glaucoma will be permanent.

**What are the Risk Factors?**

Glaucoma occurs regularly in people of all ages, including newborn infants, adolescents and senior citizens. However, some people are inherently at higher risk of developing glaucoma than others. The most significant risk factors include:

- Being at least 60 years old
- Family history of glaucoma
- African-American or Hispanic ancestry
- Elevated eye pressure
- Severe nearsightedness
- Long-term steroid use, such as using an asthma inhaler
- Thin central corneas
- Previous eye injury
- Systemic problems such as diabetes, hypertension, migraine headaches or poor circulation

Research has proven that glaucoma is partially hereditary. If you have glaucoma, don't keep it a secret from your family! You could save their vision by telling them how essential it is that they get regular glaucoma screenings.

### **How Can You Protect Your Vision?**

Glaucoma is best detected through a comprehensive eye exam that includes eye drops that dilate your eyes. The exam must measure your eye's intraocular pressure and include a visual examination of the optic nerve's health.

I recommend a comprehensive eye exam once every 1 to 2 years until the age of 65 for persons without glaucoma risk factors and annual exams for those with glaucoma risk factors. All people over the age of 65 need to have yearly eye exams.

Early detection, through periodic comprehensive eye exams, is the key to protecting your vision from glaucoma.

If it has been a while since your last exam, please do not hesitate to call today to inquire about scheduling your next appointment. For your convenience, you can now email either office to arrange an appointment. E-mail the Buffalo Grove office at [ReceptionBG@BKraftMD.com](mailto:ReceptionBG@BKraftMD.com).

### **IMPORTANT NEWS**

The Buffalo Grove office reconstruction has been completed. Come see our expanded optical department! Parking is always free.

### **Holiday Hours:**

Both offices will be open until noon on Thursday, December 31st.

### **SPECIALS**

Our BOTOX, JUVEDERM and LATISSE specials have been extended until the end of January 2010! Call today for details!

Receive 15% off a complete pair of eyeglasses from one of Total Eye Care's optical departments through February 15<sup>th</sup> if you present a copy of this email when you place your initial order.

If you have any questions or comments, I would be delighted to hear from you. Please email me at: [DrBKraft@BKraftMD.com](mailto:DrBKraft@BKraftMD.com).

If you would like to add an email address to Dr. Kraft's newsletter distribution list, please send a request to [Newsletter@BKraftMD.com](mailto:Newsletter@BKraftMD.com). If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please [click here](#) or type "Unsubscribe" in the subject line and forward this email to the following address: [Newsletter@BKraftMD.com](mailto:Newsletter@BKraftMD.com).

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