



The Beacon

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Med-Cert Medical Management Resources

“Guiding your way to better health management”

Glaucoma Basics

Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness in the U.S., with more than 2 million adult Americans having the disease.

Glaucoma has long been called "the silent thief of sight," because there can be significant damage to the eye before the problem is discovered.

Glaucoma is a collection of diseases, all of which share a common outcome: irreversible damage to delicate nerve fibers and the optic nerve that sends information to the brain.

Chronic Open-Angle Glaucoma

Chronic open-angle glaucoma is the most common form of this disease; accounting for about 75 to 90 percent of cases. In chronic open-angle glaucoma, both eyes may be affected at the same time, but one eye is often worse than the other. It generally appears in middle age and seems to have a genetic component; one in five people with glaucoma have a close relative with the condition. Sight begins to fade in the outer field; if untreated, tunnel vision and then blindness follow.

The inside of the eye continuously produces and drains away a fluid called aqueous humor. As the fresh

aqueous is produced by cells inside the eye, an equal amount must exit through a drainage passageway. If not enough drains away, pressure will increase inside the eye. Permanent vision loss is the result of intermittent or persistent high pressure on the delicate retinal nerve fibers.

Narrow or Closed-Angle Glaucoma

Narrow or closed-angle glaucoma is less common and occurs suddenly with blurred vision, a great deal of pain in the eye and head, and redness, usually in one eye first. In closed-angle glaucoma, the flow of aqueous is blocked from entering the drainage system, causing a sudden and severe rise in pressure inside the eye. Just like in open-angle glaucoma, the high pressure permanently damages the retinal and optic nerve fibers. Acute closed-angle glaucoma is a medical emergency and needs immediate medical care to restore normal aqueous outflow, reduce pressure, and prevent permanent damage to the eye and blindness.

Congenital Glaucoma

Congenital glaucoma is rare. It is present in some infants at birth or within the first few years of life. Infants with glaucoma usually have cloudy corneas (the front of the eye)

that are sensitive to light, and have excessive tearing. If the problem is not diagnosed and treated early, severe vision loss and even blindness may occur. When a similar type of glaucoma occurs between age 3 and adulthood, it is called *juvenile glaucoma*.

Secondary Glaucoma

Secondary glaucoma is a broad category of glaucoma problems usually associated with another eye disease or disorder, such as a very mature cataract, uveitis (inflammation inside the eye), bleeding, eye tumor, or an eye injury.

People with diabetes can develop abnormal blood vessels inside the eye, making them susceptible to neovascular glaucoma, a particularly severe form of the disease in which new blood vessels obstruct the flow of aqueous fluid from the eye.

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Sleep Tips for Cold or Flu

How can you get the rest you need when a stuffy nose and hacking cough make sleep hard to come by?

- **Prop yourself up.** Sinus pressure gets better when your head is higher than your body, so let gravity work for you. When you lie down, postnasal drip can build up, making your throat sore and triggering a cough. Make a wedge with a few pillows to prop yourself up in bed. You may breathe and sleep a little easier.
- **Use a vaporizer or humidifier.** Flu and cold symptoms can cause your airways to become dry and make them raw. Moisturize the air with a humidifier or vaporizer. Check the directions and clean it regularly so it doesn't trap mold or bacteria.
- **Drink or eat something hot.** Breathing the steam from hot soup or drinks can help your dried-out nasal passages, loosen mucus, and make it easier to clear your airways. Adding some honey can soothe your throat and help with cough. Before bed, take a hot bath or shower.
- **Try cold and flu medicines.** Make sure to carefully read the labels of all over-the-counter nighttime medicines for cold and flu symptoms. Match your symptoms with the right meds. If you're not sure what's right for your symptoms, ask your pharmacist.
- **Don't drink alcohol.** Sure, it may make you drowsy. But it actually makes people wake up more during the night. Alcohol can also dry you out, swell your sinuses, and react badly with cold or flu medicines. Wait until you're feeling better.

- **Sleep alone.** It may be better to sleep away from your partner when you're sick. That way you won't risk spreading the sickness. And you can cough, blow your nose, and get out of bed without waking someone else up.
- **Can't sleep? Get up.** Try something else to make you sleepy. Sit in a chair and read for a little while. Listen to music. When you feel sleepier get back to bed.

DON'T FORGET TO PRECERTIFY

Med-Cert's Toll-free Precert Telephone Number is (800)-356-7126 and should be reflected on your health insurance ID cards.

It is ultimately the responsibility of the employee/participant/member to make sure precertification has been done. Many plans will reduce your benefit amount if you fail to precertify.

Group Health Plans vary from one employer to the next so it is important for you to know what your health plan requires. Call the customer service representative for your health plan if you have questions.

Below is a list of some of the common Standard Precertification Notification Requirements.

- *Inpatient Hospital Stays*
- *Inpatient Treatment for Mental and Emotional Conditions or Substance Abuse*
- *Inpatient Rehabilitation Therapy*
- *Skilled Nursing Care*
- *Outpatient Stays over 12 hours*
- *Outpatient Surgeries*
- *Physical Therapy after first 6 visits*
- *Speech Therapy after first 6 visits*
- *Home Health Care*
- *Hospice Care*
- *Maternity – on confirmation of pregnancy (or at least 2 months prior to delivery) and again on admission for delivery*
- *Outpatient Procedures – refer to your Employee Benefit Plan booklet as some plans require precertification for outpatient procedures*

Did you know??

Men loose about 40 hairs a day.
Women loose about 70 hairs a day....

Recipe Corner

Maple Chili Glazed Pork



Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground chipotle pepper
- 1 pound pork tenderloin, trimmed and cut crosswise into 1-inch-thick medallions
- 2 teaspoons canola oil
- 1/4 cup apple cider
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon cider vinegar

Directions

1. Mix chili powder, salt and ground chipotle in a small bowl. Sprinkle over both sides of pork.
2. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the pork and cook until golden, 1 to 2 minutes per side. Add cider, syrup and vinegar to the pan. Bring to a boil, scraping up any browned bits. Reduce the heat to medium and cook, turning the pork occasionally to coat, until the sauce is reduced to a thick glaze, 1 to 3 minutes. Serve the pork drizzled with the glaze.



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