

# A Roadmap for Making the Diagnosis in Glaucoma

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## Disclosures

**Michael Chaglasian, O.D.**

- In the past 12 months Dr Schmidt has received honoraria or compensation from the following Companies:
- Aerie- Advisory Board, Speaker Bureau
- Allergan- Advisory Board, Speaker Bureau
- Avellino - Research
- B+L- Advisory Board, Speaker Bureau
- Carl Zeiss - Consultant, Advisory Board
- Equinox- Research
- Topcon- Consultant
- Optos- Research

**Eric E. Schmidt, O.D.**

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- Carl Zeiss – Consultant, Advisory Board
- Sun- Advisory Board
- Eyenovia – Consultant
- Kala – Speakers Bureau

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## Topics/Sections

- Who is the Glaucoma Suspect?
  - Know the Key Risk Factors
- How to evaluate the glaucomatous optic disc?
  - Yes, you still have to do this
- Perimetry: The Essentials
  - No, they haven't gone away.
- OCT Imaging: The Essentials
  - Really get know your device and what it's telling (or not!)

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## Who is the Glaucoma Suspect?

### This starts with a Risk Factor Assessment.

**Risk Assessment in Clinical Practice:** (quick look at 3)

- Family History
- Diabetes
- Systemic Hypertension

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## Risk Factors: Family History

- POAG is a multi-factorial polygenetic disease
- Rotterdam Study:
  - the lifetime absolute risk of glaucoma at age 80 years was found to be almost 10 times higher for individuals having relatives with glaucoma, (22.0 versus 2.4%).
- “family history alone cannot account for the observed proportion of the disease, suggesting that non-genetic factors play a significant role in the overall occurrence of glaucoma.”

Ophthalmol 112(9) 2005

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## Genetics in Glaucoma

ARTICLE

Genetics and genetic testing for glaucoma

Matthew A. Miller, John H. Finger, and Daniel I. Belski

**Purpose of review**  
In recent decades, investigators have identified numerous genes and genetic factors that cause or contribute to glaucoma. These findings have increased our understanding of disease mechanisms, provided us with new diagnostic tools, and may play a role in development of improved therapies for glaucoma. However, genetic testing is most useful when it is warranted for appropriate patients. The purpose of this article is to review key genetic and recent developments regarding the genetics and genetic testing for glaucoma and to provide recommendations for when genetic testing may be warranted.

**Recent findings**  
Large genome-wide association studies have identified multiple new susceptibility loci associated with primary open angle glaucoma and primary angle closure glaucoma.

**Summary**  
Several glaucoma-associated genes and genetic risk factors for glaucoma have been discovered. As a result, there are specific clinical scenarios in which genetic testing is warranted. In select cases (e.g., familial juvenile onset angle glaucoma), genetic testing can serve as a powerful tool to improve diagnosis, prognosis, efficacy of disease management, and selection of treatment, enabling physicians to better optimize care for their patients.

**Keywords**  
Genetics; testing; genetics; glaucoma

**The UK Biobank resource with deep phenotyping and genomic data**

**The African Descent and Glaucoma Evaluation Study (ADAGES) III**

**Contribution of Genotype to Glaucoma Phenotype in African Americans: Study Design and Baseline Data**

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Genetics in Glaucoma

JAMA | Original Investigation

Association of Genetic Variants With Primary Open-Angle Glaucoma Among Individuals With African Ancestry

The Genetics of Glaucoma in People of African Descent (GGAD) Consortium

**IMPORTANCE:** Primary open-angle glaucoma presents with increased prevalence and a higher degree of disability in populations of African ancestry compared with European or Asian ancestry. Despite this, inclusion of African ancestry remains understudied in genetic research for identifying disorders.

**OBJECTIVE:** To perform a genome-wide association study (GWAS) of African ancestry populations and evaluate potential mechanisms of pathogenesis for loci associated with primary open-angle glaucoma.

**DESIGN AND RELEVANCE:** In this genome-wide association study, variants at the APB2 locus demonstrated differential association with primary open-angle glaucoma by ancestry. If validated in additional populations this finding may have implications for risk assessment and therapeutic strategies.

JAMA. 2019;322(17):1682-1691

**Genetic Risk Score Is Associated with Vertical Cup-to-Disc Ratio and Improves Prediction of Primary Open-Angle Glaucoma in Latinos**

Deen R. Nemes, MD, MA, Huijin Kim, MD, Fangfang Fan, MD, Xianxi Guo, PhD

**Purpose:** Genome-wide association studies have identified multiple genetic variants associated with vertical cup-to-disc ratio (VCDR). Genetic risk scores (GRS) combine the aggregate genetic effect of individual variants into a risk to categorize those carrying genetic variants into a single number. The objective of this study was to construct GRS for VCDR and to determine whether the GRS are associated with VCDR and whether the GRS improve the discriminatory ability for primary open-angle glaucoma (POAG) in a Latino population.

**Design:** Population-based genetic association study.

**Participants:** A total of 6733 Latino participants recruited from Los Angeles.

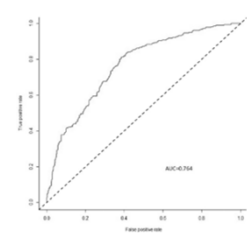
**Measures and Main Results:** GRS were constructed using 38 previously reported VCDR single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs), as well as SNPs from our own genome-wide association study. Linear and logistic regression analyses examined the associations of GRS with VCDR and POAG, respectively. To evaluate the discriminatory ability of the GRS for POAG, we conducted receiver operating characteristic (ROC) analyses.

**Results:** The GRS were associated significantly with VCDR ( $P < 1.0 \times 10^{-15}$ ). After adjusting for age, gender, central corneal thickness, intraocular pressure, and education, the weighted GRS explained an additional 2.74% of the variance in VCDR. Multiple the weighted GRS derived from previously reported SNPs resulted in a moderate improvement in the discriminatory ability for POAG during ROC analyses, resulting in an area under the ROC curve (AUC) of 0.75 (95% CI, 0.70–0.79). When our own SNPs were added, the AUC increased significantly to 0.80 (95% CI, 0.75–0.85) ( $P < 1.0 \times 10^{-15}$ ). The weighted GRS resulted in the strongest GRS.

**Conclusions:** To our knowledge, we identified a novel association between GRS and VCDR and its improvement in the discriminatory ability of POAG in a Latino population. *Ophthalmology* 2019;126:810–821. Published by Elsevier on behalf of the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

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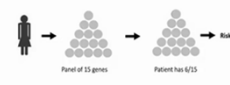
Genetic Factors and Screening



AUC=0.754

Nat Genet. 2018 June ; 50(6): 778–782.

- To assess POAG genetic risk need to test multiple genes at once- 'genetic risk score'
- Polygenic risk scores based on sufficiently large and well-powered genome-wide association studies provide the best estimate of disease risk



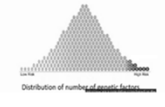
Panel of 12 genes → Patient has 6/12 → Risk Score

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Polygenic Risk Score

Polygenic risk scores (PRS)


- PRS is the cumulative impact of genome-wide risk factors.
- Individuals are scored based on how many risk factors they carry.



Distribution of number of genetic factors

**Keratoconus (KC) Risk Assessment**

Based on the polygenic risk score of 95, this patient's risk for KC is HIGH.



0 to 50 Low risk 50 to 100 Moderate risk 100 to 150 High risk

**THE POLYGENIC KC RISK SCORE:** The AncestryGen Eye Test provides a polygenic risk score for individuals tested for their genetic risk for KC. The risk score is the cumulative sum of individual risk contributed by several independent SNPs that were identified in our genetic association study by screening thousands of variants in 75 genes related to corneal structure and function. KC is a complex genetic disease that involves genetic and environmental components as well as other mechanisms that contribute to the development of the disease. Genetics is an important contributor in KC risk, but it is not the only contributing factor that determines risk for KC.

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Risk Factors: Diabetes

**Yes, a Risk Factor: ~1.35x greater risk**

- Just NOT very strong
- Beaver Dam Eye Study
- Blue Mountains Eye Study
- Nurses' Health Study
- Los Angeles Latino Eye Study

**Progression Risk Yes:**

- EMGT and AGIS

**Progression NOT a Risk:**

- Barbados Eye Study

**Older Data:**

- DM is NOT a risk factor:
- Baltimore Eye Survey
- Barbados Eye Study
- European Glaucoma Prevention Study
- Rotterdam Study
- Visual Impairment Project

**Diabetes Mellitus as a Risk Factor for Open-Angle Glaucoma: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis**

Huoshu Zhao<sup>1,2</sup>, Wei Wang<sup>3</sup>, Xiaohu Huang<sup>4</sup>, Xianxi Guo<sup>5</sup>

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**Abstract**

**Objective:** To determine the association between diabetes mellitus (DM) and primary open-angle glaucoma (POAG).

**Methods:** This is a systematic review and meta-analysis of case-control and cohort studies. The literature search included two databases (PubMed and Embase) and the reference list of the selected studies. Separate meta-analyses for case-control studies and cohort studies were conducted using random-effects models, with results reported as adjusted odds ratios (ORs) and relative risks (RRs), respectively.

**Results:** Ten case-control studies and six population-based cohort studies were included in this meta-analysis. The pooled OR was 1.35 (95% CI, 1.11–1.65). The association between DM and POAG based on the risk estimates of the included studies was 1.40 (95% CI, 1.11–1.68). There was considerable heterogeneity among the case-control studies that reported an association between DM and POAG ( $P < 0.001$ ) and no significant heterogeneity among the cohort studies ( $P = 0.17$ ). Our meta-analysis demonstrated a statistically significant association between DM and POAG for the association between DM and POAG was 1.35 (95% CI, 1.11–1.65).

**Conclusions:** Individuals with DM have an increased risk of developing POAG.

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Diabetes Summary

- The current literature does not provide a definitive link between DM and POAG.
- Vascular dysregulation in diabetes likely has a component in glaucoma disease but is likely NOT a sole, initiating cause of glaucoma,
- Should only be considered as a modest RF compared to other RFs (eg family history and CCT)

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Risk Factors: Systemic Hypertension

- No definitive link to elevated BP
  - NO association in several studies
  - High Blood Pressure may be “Protective”
  - Low BP is a factor in Ocular Perfusion Pressure
    - OPP=BP-IOP
    - Increased at OPP of <50-55 mmHg
  - OVER treatment of HTN can be an issue (BP too low)
- Cardiovascular Disease
  - no solid evidence of RF link

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# Some Basic Guidelines:

Short Overview and Highlights

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## OHTS and Corneal Thickness

For all IOP's, a *thinner cornea increased the risk* of developing glaucoma at 5 yrs

IOP	CCT Microns		
	<555	>555-<588	>588
>25.75	36%	13%	6%
>23.75-<25.75	12%	10%	7%
<23.75	17%	9%	2%

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## OHTS & CCT: 3 Outcomes

- Thin:** <555 μm      High Risk (thus treat!)
- Average:** 555-588 μm      No change in Risk (treat or monitor, use other RFs)
- Thick:** >588 μm      Low Risk

Applies to only to patients with ocular hypertension

**Know this!**

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## Diagnosis In The Glaucoma Suspect —When To Treat?

Glaucoma suspects can be (broadly) categorized into two groups:

- Ocular hypertensive subjects with risk factors for the future development of glaucoma
  - These patients are addressed by OHTS data and who to treat
- Subjects with questionable glaucomatous findings that cannot definitely be distinguished from normal
  - e.g., suspicious appearance of optic disk, RNFL/GCA or VF and
  - IOP that is 21 mmHg or lower

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## Open Angle Glaucoma Suspect

- The Decision Tree:**
  - The patient **without** OCT, VF or ONH damage
  - This may be someone with IOP >21 or <21 mmHg

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## Who do you treat? Options, Bias, Preferences

Rather than a simplistic approach of treating everyone with an IOP of over 21 mmHg, treatment is held off until there is sufficient evidence of glaucoma damage at some level (OCT, VF, )

- This is a practice philosophy that can be followed for **low risk** patients
- Or, we elect to treat those with the most significant risk factors.**

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Early Glaucoma or Not? Example findings

Pro

- Family history
- Elevated IOP

One Way to Organize and Sort Risk Factors

Mixed

- Suspicious optic nerve
- CCT = 570
- Unreliable VF

Con

- Normal OCT
- Younger age

What do you do?

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Glaucoma Suspect: The Ocular Hypertensive

- IOP 21-30+ mmHg with
  - Normal appearing or suspicious optic nerve, But NO definitive changes!
    - no visual field defects
  - some risk factors
- Follow OHTS Treatment Guidelines:

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Glaucoma Suspect: IOP under 21

- Management Options:
  - no single treatment plan nor guidelines, varies with every patient, must be individualized
- Follow these patients every 3-6 months with observation and repeated: ONH, VF, OCT, IOP
  - Wait until confirmation of true OCT/VF defect, ONH change
- Or, may initiate therapy for those with **3** or more risk factors: positive family history,
  - C/D ratio 0.8 or greater, asymmetry of the nerve heads
  - African American; diabetes, etc.
  - Questionable visual field defects, fluctuating IOP

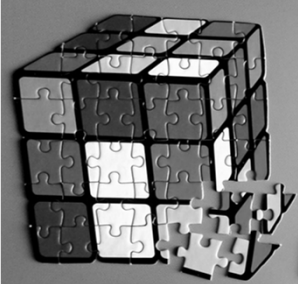
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Patients Who Require Therapy:

- At any IOP
  - Glaucomatous ONH Changes
    - As identified by you or via photograph, OR
  - Strongly abnormal, characteristic and reliable OCT
    - This must have some "clinical correlation"
    - Rarely do you treat based upon this alone (patient has other findings)
    - Watch out for "Red Disease"
  - Characteristic/Confirmed Visual Field Loss
    - (not required for diagnosis)
- OHTN with IOP over 30 mmHg
  - Some exceptions; eg very, thick cornea

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Glaucoma diagnosis can be a very complex puzzle:



- Requirements
  - Organized, step-by-step approach
  - Sort and organize the data
  - Identify good data
  - Ignore bad/unreliable data
  - Confirm data when necessary
  - Sort and organize again
  - No need to rush your decision
  - Individualize to your patient
- Begin therapy (later) or monitor

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CASE EXAMPLE

56 yo  
+ Fam Hx of Glaucoma  
Systemic HTN (lisinopril/HCTZ)

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Visit Date	OD	OS
04/11/2017	22	34
01/17/2017	22	32
11/15/2016	23	25
09/20/2016	19	20
03/14/2016	23	26
03/06/2014	18	20
10/15/2012	17	20

### Discussion

OHTN?  
Early Glaucoma?  
Treat? Don't Treat?  
Monitor? How Frequently?  
Other Information?  
Next Steps?

What is the future risk?

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### Back to our Patient: Treat or Observe?

Can we get additional information?

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### How to Manage OHTN?

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### OHTS Risk Calculator (online)

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### OHTS Risk Calculator (online)

FACTORS							
?	Age	RIGHT EYE MEASUREMENTS			LEFT EYE MEASUREMENTS		
		1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>
?	Untreated Intraocular Pressure (mm Hg)	23	22	22	25	32	34
?	Central Corneal Thickness (microns)	556	556	556	561	561	561
?	Vertical Cup to Disc Ratio by Contour	0.40			0.60		
?	Pattern Standard Deviation						
	Humphrey (dB)	1.7			2.4		
	Octopus loss variance (dB)						

Print

Reset

16.3%

The patient's estimated 5-year risk (%) of developing glaucoma in at least one eye.

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### What does OHTS Risk Mean?

Expert Panel Recommendations

< 5%	No treatment
5-15%	Treatment optional
>15%	Treatment recommended

These are suggested guidelines only, treat every case individually

Must consider all and other factors (family Hx, Drance Heme, age.)

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Nocturnal IOP and Glaucoma

- Most individuals spend 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of day asleep in recumbent position
- Habitual IOPs of most untreated glaucomas higher during nocturnal/sleep period than office hours
  - IOP measured sitting during day and supine position at night
- Important to understand and recognize this
  - May explain why glaucomatous damage occurring in certain individuals

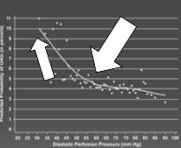
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Ocular Perfusion Pressure (OPP) = <50mmHg

- The differential between arterial (diastolic) BP and IOP
  - $OPP = DBP - IOP$ 
    - eg 65 mmHg - 20 mmHg = 45
- Ocular perfusion is regulated to maintain constant blood flow to the optic nerve despite fluctuating blood pressure and IOP
- The major cause of reduced blood flow is thought to be secondary to vascular dysregulation in susceptible patients, resulting from abnormal/insufficient autoregulation.

Los Angeles Latino Eye Study

- Cross-sectional study of 8,357 Latinos, >40 years in Los Angeles, CA.
- Persons with low diastolic and systolic perfusion pressures had a higher risk of POAG.
- DOPP <50 mmHg, the prevalence of glaucoma rapidly increases linearly.



Venita R, et al. Ophthalmology. 2006;113:1435-1445.

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Clinical Control of OPP

- Lower IOP improves OPP
  - Remains number 1 goal !!
- Measure blood pressure on your patients
- Higher systemic BP improves OPP, but you do not necessarily want to raise BP:
  - Stroke #3 cause of death in US behind CVD & CA!
  - Avoid drugs that lower systemic BP beyond patient's desired systemic control.
  - Avoid nocturnal hypotension.
  - Communicate with PCP

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To treat or not to treat?

IOP Guidelines: Randomized Clinical Trials

- IOP Is the Most Prominent and Consistent Glaucoma Risk Factor
  - Important Considerations and Facts
    - **Ocular Hypertension Treatment Study (OHTS)**
      - CCT of less than 555  $\mu$  has higher risk
      - IOP: every 1mmHg higher (>22) increased risk by 10%
    - **Early Manifest Glaucoma Trial (EMGT)**
      - Every 1mmHg of IOP reduction lowers risk of progression by 10%

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To treat or not to treat?

IOP Guidelines: Randomized Clinical Trials

- **Advanced Glaucoma Intervention Study (AGIS)**
  - Another IOP related factoid:
    - IOP always under 18mmHg, or keeps a mean of 12mmHg, has a lower risk of progression
- **Collaborative Normal-Tension Glaucoma Study**
  - 30% reduction of IOP reduces risk of progression
  - Note that many patients with NTG do not progress, while other with 30% IOP reduction continue to progress

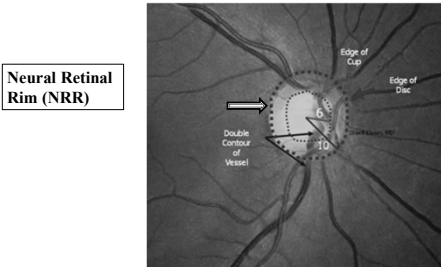
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Yes, you still need to look at the optic disc.

Optional Review Section

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Optic Disc Defined



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Glaucomatous Disc Features

- Descriptive terms to know : examples coming up
- increased (meaning it changed) cup-to-disc ratio or significant cup asymmetry;
  - decreased or documented change in neuroretinal rim area;
  - notch of the neuroretinal rim;
  - saucerization of neuroretinal rim;
  - flame-shaped disc hemorrhage;
  - nerve fiber layer loss;
  - peripapillary atrophy
  - Laminar dot sign (non-specific)

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TIPS and PITFALLS

- Do not emphasize the C/D ratio
- Concentrate on the neural retinal rim
- Look for focal defects (notching) and and/or generalized thinning
- Evaluate symmetry between eyes
- Disc Hemes
- Peripapillary atrophy
- Baring of circumlinear vessels
- Loss of NRR tissue

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Examples of ONHs

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CASE JM

54 YO, AA  
IOP  
IOP Range = 16- 20 OD; 16-19 OS  
CCT= 462 OD 468 OS  
CH = 8.8

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CASE LP

43 year old male  
Referred for Possible Open Angle Glaucoma

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Visual fields:  
are still essential!

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GLAUCOMA SEVERITY SCALE DEFINITIONS:

- Mild Stage:**
  - optic nerve changes consistent with glaucoma but *NO visual field abnormalities on any visual field test*.
- Moderate Stage:**
  - optic nerve changes AND glaucomatous visual field abnormalities in hemifield and *not* within 5 degrees of fixation.
- Severe Stage:**
  - optic nerve changes consistent with glaucoma AND glaucomatous visual field abnormalities in *both hemifields* and/or loss *within 5 degrees* of fixation in at least one hemifield.
- If both of the patient's eyes are glaucomatous, code for the more severe stage of the two eyes.*

American Glaucoma Society

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Mild

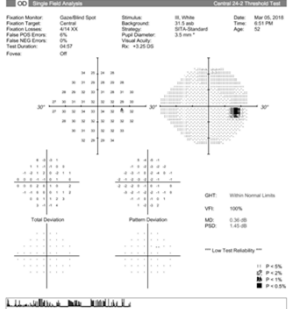
Moderate

Severe

Severe

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AGS def: Mild Stage Glaucoma



- Patient would have other definite signs of glaucoma:
  - ONH notching
  - OCT/RNFL loss
- “Pre-Perimetric”** is another term that is sometimes used

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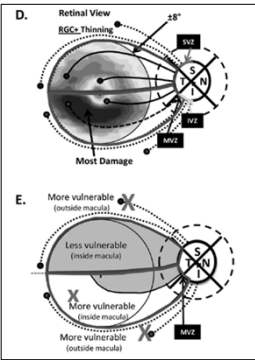
Perimetry: The Essentials

- Central VF Testing (cont.)
  - Rationale (Don Hood papers)
  - Macular Zone Vulnerability
- How and when use 10-2 VFs or the new 24-2C (adds 10 Central test points):
  - Good Test Takers, Younger patients
  - Minimal to no defects on 24-2
  - OCT Macula/Ganglion Cell scan is abnormal
  - High Risk Patients

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Review of Why?

Don Hood, PhD.



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**“24-2C”**



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## Ophthalmology 2021;128:1722-1735

[illegible]

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## 122

## 123

Figure 1 displays a collage of 15 panels illustrating various astronomical observations and data analysis results. The panels are arranged in a grid-like fashion, showing a variety of data including images, spectra, and maps, illustrating the results of the study.

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# Significant VF loss starts here:

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### Common Forms of OCT B-Scan Segmentation Failure and Image Artifact

1. De-centration (28% of scans)
2. Error associated with posterior vitreous detachment (14%)
3. Posterior RNFL misidentification (8%)
4. Poor signal (5%)
5. High Myopia (2%)
6. Peripapillary atrophy associated error (1%)
7. Incomplete segmentation (1%)
8. Motion artifact (<1%)

⚠ All have the potential of being misread by you as true disease, the so called "red disease"

⚠ As any artifact is categorized as being outside the normative database, thus automatically depicted in red on the report

⚠ Then leading to an erroneous diagnosis and possibly unnecessary treatment

Glaucoma versus red disease: imaging and glaucoma diagnosis

Robert F. Chang and Richard A. Lee

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### Tip #3: Understand Structure-Function Classic Confirmation vs. Normal Variability

Use this to confirm the presence of glaucoma vs other disease or artifact.

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### Classic S-F

All the pieces fit together.

Correlating Structural and Functional Damage in Glaucoma

Robert F. Chang, Richard A. Lee, and Richard A. Lee

A

B

C

D

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RNFL

GCA

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Questions?

THANK YOU

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Chaglasian, Schmidt

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