

# Good news on glaucoma-caused blindness

By ACSH Staff — January 24, 2014



Researchers led by Dr. Mehrdad Malihi and colleagues from

the Mayo clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, examined the incidence of OAG-caused blindness in residents of Olmsted County, Minnesota at two different time periods between 1965 and 2000. All residents aged 40 and above were included in the study, which was published in the journal *Ophthalmology*.<sup>[1]</sup>

They compared the incidence of blindness in the period between 1965-1980 with the incidence between 1981 and 2000. The average term of follow-up for the earlier study was 15 years, while that for the later study ranged from 1 month to 28 years. The investigators found that the cumulative probability of blindness in at least one eye was 25.8 percent for the people studied between 1965 and 1980, and was only 13.5 percent for those diagnosed during the 1981-2000 study.

The annualized population incidence of OAG-related blindness was 16.6 occurrences per 100,000 population in the early study, but only 7.1 occurrences per 100,000 population in the later period. The authors noted that although the incidence of OAG appeared to decrease over time, increasing age at diagnosis was a significant risk factor for progression to blindness.

If these data are also true for the population of the country as a whole, it would be very good news, commented ACSH's Dr. Gilbert Ross. He continued It's important for adults to be screened for glaucoma there are effective treatments available, and they could help prevent a progression to blindness, which would be a real public health benefit.

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