**Beating Invisible Glaucoma Through Education**

World glaucoma week will be observed globally from the 12th to 18th of March 2017 under the theme “Beat invisible Glaucoma”. The World Glaucoma Association and the World Glaucoma Patients Association have formed a joint initiative to raise awareness of glaucoma and educate the public about the facts surrounding the disease. Optipharm Eye Centre will also be playing their part by having their annual public awareness and education exhibit at all locations in the region.

Glaucoma is a potentially blinding eye disease that can suddenly steal your vision. It develops when the intraocular fluid that is naturally produced by the eye is not drained properly. This can be caused by a blockage in the drainage canals of your eyes. When this occurs the pressure in the eye builds up above normal levels, which in turn damages your optical nerves. If left untreated this nerve damage can eventually lead to blindness.

Everyone is at risk of developing glaucoma but there are some groups at a higher risk due to; age, family history, medical conditions and ethnicity. Also there are different types of glaucoma such as: open angle, angle closure, secondary, pigmentary, normal-tension, congenital, exfoliative, neovascular, uveitic and traumatic glaucoma. The two main types are Open Angle and Angle- Closure Glaucoma.

Open Angle is the most common form and is responsible for at least 90% of all cases reported. It is caused when drainage canals slowly clog thereby gradually increasing your eye pressure. This condition is irreversible and lifelong and often has no noticeable signs or symptoms.

Angle- closure glaucoma or narrow-angle glaucoma and is a very rare form of the disease. It is characterized by the blockage of drainage canals and the sudden rise in eye pressure. It develops very quickly and comes with noticeable symptoms that require immediate medical attention to prevent complete, irreversible blindness. This form is usually signaled by your eyes turning red, headaches, intense eye pain, nausea, blurred vision and seeing rainbows around lights at night. This type of glaucoma requires surgery to treat the problem which will be helpful once immediate attention is given.

There are different treatment methods for glaucoma; however it is typically treated by using medications that works to decrease the amount of fluid made by the eye or help to better drain the fluid in your eyes. This would serve to control your eye pressure and by carefully and correctly following your doctor’s instructions these medication will prevent your glaucoma from getting worst.

To prevent glaucoma from stealing your sight, regular eye examinations you’re your ophthalmologist allows for early detection and successful treatment and control the disease in order to prevent blindness. Remember it is immensely important to take your glaucoma medication as prescribed in order to maintain control of the disease

Optipharm Eye Centre is passionate about helping you to beat glaucoma. For more information please contact Dr. Benet Henry consultant ophthalmologist at vinoptipharminc@gmal.com or at 4856685, 496-3333 or 532-5444.