**What Do Christie Brinkley and Bono Have in Common?**

Both supermodel Christie Brinkley and Bono, the lead singer of U2, were diagnosed with glaucoma during a routine eye exam. Both were also surprised by the diagnosis since they weren’t experiencing problems with their vision. That’s the sinister nature of [glaucoma](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/what-is-glaucoma), one of the leading causes of blindness worldwide: People with glaucoma can lose most of their vision before they experience [symptoms](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/glaucoma-symptoms). Once vision is lost, it cannot be regained. That’s why [INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME] and the [American Academy of Ophthalmology](https://www.aao.org/) is urging people to get [regular eye screenings](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/eye-exams-101) to protect their good vision.

Glaucoma is a group of diseases that damages the eye’s optic nerve. The optic nerve transmits visual information to the brain, allowing us to see. Because glaucoma often progresses slowly, affecting just peripheral or side vision, people with glaucoma can suffer significant vision loss before they notice a problem or a change in their vision. Central vision, the vision used to read, drive or watch TV, is usually unaffected until the disease is advanced.

The experience of both celebrities also serves as a reminder that glaucoma doesn’t have to mean blindness. If caught early, [glaucoma can be treated](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/what-is-glaucoma) with medicated [eye drops](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/glaucoma-eyedrop-medicine) or laser treatments.

**“**It may seem harmless to skip a routine eye exam if you don’t notice any vision changes, but glaucoma, as well as some other eye conditions, can cause vision loss without any warning signs,” said Dianna Seldomridge, M.D., clinical spokesperson for the American Academy of Ophthalmology. “Even though ophthalmologists have several effective treatment options, the best protection against vision loss from glaucoma is an early diagnosis.”

[INSERT YOUR SPOKESPERSON’S QUOTE HERE]

The American Academy of Ophthalmology [recommends](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/eye-exams-101) all healthy adults get a comprehensive eye exam by age 40 to screen for blinding eye diseases. If eye disease runs in [your family](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/family-reunions), you should see an ophthalmologist as soon as possible if you haven’t already.

Here’s who’s most at risk of a glaucoma diagnosis:

* African Americans. They are 6 to 8 times more likely to get glaucoma than white Americans. Blindness from glaucoma is 6 to 8 times more common in African Americans than white Americans.
* ·Hispanic Americans. This group faces an increased risk comparable to African Americans, and the disease may also progress faster as they age, compared with other ethnic groups.
* Asians.  Being of Asian descent increases the risk for the less common types of glaucoma: angle-closure glaucoma and normal-tension glaucoma.
* Those people with a family history of glaucoma.
* People with diabetes.  Glaucoma is 2 times more in people with diabetes than people without diabetes.
* People who are very nearsighted.
* Anyone over age 40 is at risk and should be screened.

For more information about eye health and how to protect your eyes, visit the Academy’s EyeSmart [website](https://www.aao.org/eye-health).