

Glaucoma Patients: Be Cautious of Water Overload

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In this era of fitness every one is concerned about what he/she is eating. Everyone is calorie conscious and prefers drinking lot of water/fluids. It is good for general person but not for a glaucoma patient.

Glaucoma or “Kala Motia” as commonly known is an eye disease where eye pressure increases to a level that is not safe for optic nerve. The balance between fluid produced inside the eye and drained out from the eye is disturbed resulting in increased pressure and damage to the optic nerve.

Glaucoma presents in different forms like Open Angle Glaucoma, Angle Closure glaucoma and secondary Glaucoma. Also there are various factors which affect the progression of Glaucoma. In angle closure Glaucoma the fluid drainage is affected.

Water therapy and different shuddhi-kriyas as per yoga are commonly practiced in our country. There is a belief that taking large quantity of water in early morning helps in bowel movement and flushes the body clean. In this water therapy the person drinks almost 4-6 glasses of water at a time in the morning empty stomach. This may do well for his/her digestive system and may create problem for the eye of the Glaucoma Patient, but not many people are aware of this.

Anything which overloads our body fluid will increase the load on drainage system. When one drinks large amount of water like this it gets absorbed in the fluid spaces of the body. So fluid in eye is produced in excess quantity. This increases the load on the drainage system of the eye. In Angle closure glaucoma the drainage system is affected and so will lead to rise in eye pressure. Thus such intake of large quantity of fluids in short span will give rise to short spikes of increase in eye pressure that may be missed on examination by eye specialist. So this type of glaucoma may get presented or aggravated if one drinks lot of water in a short span.

Every patient of Glaucoma or having a family history of glaucoma should be cautious about the water therapy. Such patients if continue water therapy habit, their Glaucoma may progress in spite the best treatment .So this should not be practiced in families with glaucoma. Glaucoma is a multifactorial disease and one needs to control to this factor as far as possible.

Water drinking test commonly used to detect such cases of glaucoma is based on similar observations. During this test we check the eye pressure after drinking one liter of water in a short time. The eye pressures are checked every half an hour for two hours. Persons with positive water drinking test should avoid large quantities of fluid of empty stomach in morning.

So be careful and watch for your glass of water!

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