

Reducing risks in normal pressure glaucoma

Written by Administrator

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Normal pressure glaucoma is a condition that responds well in most cases to lowering eye pressure with standard drops and other treatments including SLT. There is an association however with cardiovascular disease in many patients and it makes sense to reduce ones risk as far as possible, even if drops appear to be keep visual fields stable.

It would seem sensible therefore - especially for patients with this condition - to look closely at associated risk factors for heart disease, eg cholesterol level, uncontrolled blood pressure, lack of exercise, smoking, being overweight - and to address these factors too.

An article in the BMJ highlights the risks of trans-fats consumption. In 2004, the WHO recommended that trans fats should comprise no more than 1% of the total energy intake. Estimates listed in the BMJ article refer to 11000 heart attacks and 7000 avoidable deaths in the UK being attributed to trans fats. No study yet looks specifically at trans fat consumption and glaucoma, but in any case, with these figures in mind, it would appear sensible to reduce trans fat intake. Denmark has banned trans fat foodstuffs infact.

About trans fats: trans fats increase 'bad' LDL cholesterol levels.

