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Glaucoma is a leading cause of irreversible blindness worldwide, **the second leading cause of permanent blindness in the US**, and the **leading cause of irreversible blindness in African-Americans**.

Among American adults over 40, the prevalence of primary open angle glaucoma is 1.7% in whites and 5.6% in African-Americans.

The prevalence of primary open angle glaucoma increases with aging – it is three to eight times more common among people in their seventies compared to people in their forties.

A positive family history is a major risk factor for primary open angle glaucoma – the prevalence of glaucoma among siblings is 10%, and the lifetime absolute risk of developing glaucoma at age 89 is 10 times higher for relatives of glaucoma patients.

