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# Pachymetry

## A New Glaucoma Screening Test

Glaucoma is an eye disease of the optic nerve that gradually causes vision loss, usually without any initial symptoms. This vision loss typically begins slowly in the peripheral vision and can eventually progress centrally. Glaucoma is considered a silent disease because by the time people experience visual problems related to the disease they may have already lost a significant amount of their vision. If untreated, irreversible vision loss will continue and will lead to blindness.

A **Pachymeter** is an instrument intended to measure the thickness of the cornea – the clear front window into your eye. This test is important in determining a person's risk factor in developing glaucoma and is useful when interpreting eye pressure measurements. Current studies show that thinner corneas pose greater risk for glaucoma development than do mid-range or thicker corneas. Also, patients diagnosed with glaucoma and have thinner corneas are at greater risk for further progression of this disease.



The World Glaucoma Association panel considered ways to interpret the measurement of eye pressure accurately. In particular, they found the measurement of central corneal thickness to be crucial for glaucoma risk analysis in patients. The Ocular Hypertension Treatment Study found central corneal thickness measurements to be considered an important predictive risk factor for the development of glaucoma.

A pachymetry/ central corneal thickness measurement often needs to be checked only once for a patient as the readings usually do not change significantly over time. The fee for this service is \$25 and is not covered by OHIP. Payment is due at the time of the measurement and a medical receipt for your health insurance or tax purposes will be issued.