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Contact: Sarah Hecker
Prevent Blindness
Phone: (312) 363-6035
shecker@preventblindness.org

Increase in Glaucoma Cases Projected to Continue for Decades to Come

-- Prevent Blindness marks January's National Glaucoma Awareness Month by Offering Information and Resources for Patients and Caregivers --

CHICAGO (Dec. 17, 2018) – Today, nearly three million people ages 40 and older have glaucoma, according to the [Prevent Blindness](#) report, “[Future of Vision: Forecasting the Prevalence and Costs of Vision Problems](#).” Those numbers are projected to increase steadily as more baby boomers move into retirement. In the early stages, glaucoma has no symptoms, no noticeable vision loss or pain, which is why it is called the “sneak thief of sight.” By the time symptoms start to appear, some permanent damage to the eye has usually occurred. Glaucoma is a leading cause of blindness.

January has been declared as National Glaucoma Awareness Month by Prevent Blindness, the nation's oldest volunteer eye health and safety nonprofit organization, and other leading eye health groups, in an effort to educate the public on the disease, including risk factors and treatment options. Prevent Blindness offers a dedicated web page providing patients and their caregivers with additional free information at <https://www.preventblindness.org/glaucoma>

“Unfortunately, there is currently no cure for glaucoma,” said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “However, promising new treatment research is underway. Through early detection, access to care, and by diligently following your eye doctor's treatment plan, progressive vision loss from glaucoma can be significantly lessened.”

According to the [American Academy of Ophthalmology \(AAO\)](#), the eye constantly makes aqueous humor, the clear liquid inside the front part of the eye that nourishes it and keeps it inflated. As new aqueous flows into the eye, the same amount should drain out. If the drainage angle is not working properly, fluid builds up. Pressure inside the eye rises, damaging the optic nerve, which sends information from the eyes to the brain. When glaucoma damages the optic nerve, patches of vision, usually peripheral vision, are lost permanently.

Age, race, family and medical history, are all factors that increase the chances of developing glaucoma. In fact, individuals aged 60 and older are at higher risk. For African-Americans, this risk begins even earlier – those age 40 and over are up to five times more likely to have glaucoma. Hispanics are also at increased risk for glaucoma as they age. Those of Asian and Native American descent are at increased risk for

angle-closure glaucoma, caused by a rapid or sudden increase in pressure inside the eye, called intraocular pressure.

In support of Glaucoma Awareness Month, Prevent Blindness has partnered with [Santen Inc.](#), a U.S. subsidiary of Santen Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd., a global company focused exclusively on ophthalmology, on an educational campaign to raise awareness of this disease.

The AAO's EyeCare America program provides eye care at no out-of-pocket cost to medically underserved seniors age 65 and older, and glaucoma exams to those at increased risk. For more information, visit <https://www.aao.org/eyecare-america>.

For more information on glaucoma, or other financial assistance programs, [including Medicare coverage](#), please call Prevent Blindness at (800) 331-2020 or visit <https://www.preventblindness.org/glaucoma>.

About Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-800-331-2020. Or, visit us on the Web at preventblindness.org or facebook.com/preventblindness.

About Santen

As a global specialized company dedicated to ophthalmology, Santen carries out research, development, marketing, and sales of pharmaceuticals, over-the-counter products, and medical devices. Santen is the market leader for prescription ophthalmic pharmaceuticals in Japan and its products now reach patients in over 60 countries. With scientific knowledge and organizational capabilities nurtured over a nearly 130-year history, Santen provides products and services to contribute to the well-being of patients, their loved ones and consequently to society. For more information, please visit Santen websites www.SantenUSA.com (United States) and www.Santen.com (global).

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