

Pigment Dispersion Syndrome (PDS) Pigmentary Glaucoma

What is it?

In PDS, black pigment granules clog the trabecular meshwork, which is the drainage gutter that takes fluid away from the eye. Because this prevents fluid from draining properly, there is a build up of pressure inside the eye, which in some cases damages vision. PDS occurs as a result of the shape of the iris (the coloured part of the eye). Normally the iris is shaped like a plate. In PDS, the iris falls back like a hammock. This causes the pigment layer on the back of the iris to rub against the structures that lie behind it. This rubbing action releases pigment particles into the eye.

Who gets it?

1. Genetics: There is a tendency for this condition to be inherited.
2. Myopes (nearsighted persons): it is uncommon in hyperopes (farsighted persons)
3. Men develop Pigmentary Glaucoma 2 -3 times as often as women.

How does it affect my eye?

About 10 - 20% of people with PDS will develop glaucoma. It is the most common type of glaucoma in persons under age 40. Because most people with PDS are younger, they don't get checked for glaucoma routinely, and it is all too common for the diagnosis to be made after one eye has become blind or lost significant vision.

Furthermore, sudden pigment release at the time of pupillary dilation or after bouncing-type exercise, such as jogging or basketball, may produce sudden and marked rises in IOP by overloading the trabecular meshwork with pigment. Your doctor will discuss with you if you are at risk for this and advise you appropriately.

Are there special treatment considerations for PDS?

1. Eye drops.
2. Laser: Different types of laser procedures can be used in patients with PDS. This will depend upon the specific shape of your iris and the amount of pigment in your eye.