



What's New in Ophthalmology Today?

Nerve Growth Factor

Using eye drops containing nerve growth factor restored some vision in patients with advanced glaucoma. These drops appeared to protect the optic nerve and retinal nerve cells from the damage caused by glaucoma. The results were published recently in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science, PNAS* by Dr. Stefano Bonini and his team from the University of Rome. In glaucoma, the elevated intraocular pressure inside of the eye damages the optic nerve and ganglion cells which are responsible for bringing the signals from the eye to the brain. Other researchers have used **nerve growth factor** to restore brain tissue in Parkinson's and Alzheimer's patients. Dr. Bonini decided to try it on patients with glaucoma. Three patients with advanced glaucoma were treated with nerve growth factor eye drops for three months and then observed off medications for an additional three months. These patients "experienced improvements in visual field, optic nerve function, contrast sensitivity and visual acuity, **that is treatment with Nerve Growth Factor improved all parameters of visual function**" according to *Medical News Today*. They further suggested that these results would encourage further use of **nerve growth factor** in other neurodegenerative diseases including Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases. About 70 million people around the world suffer from glaucoma and it is the second leading cause of blindness. **Nerve Growth Factor** holds the promise of preventing visual loss and restoring vision to millions of patients in the years to come.

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