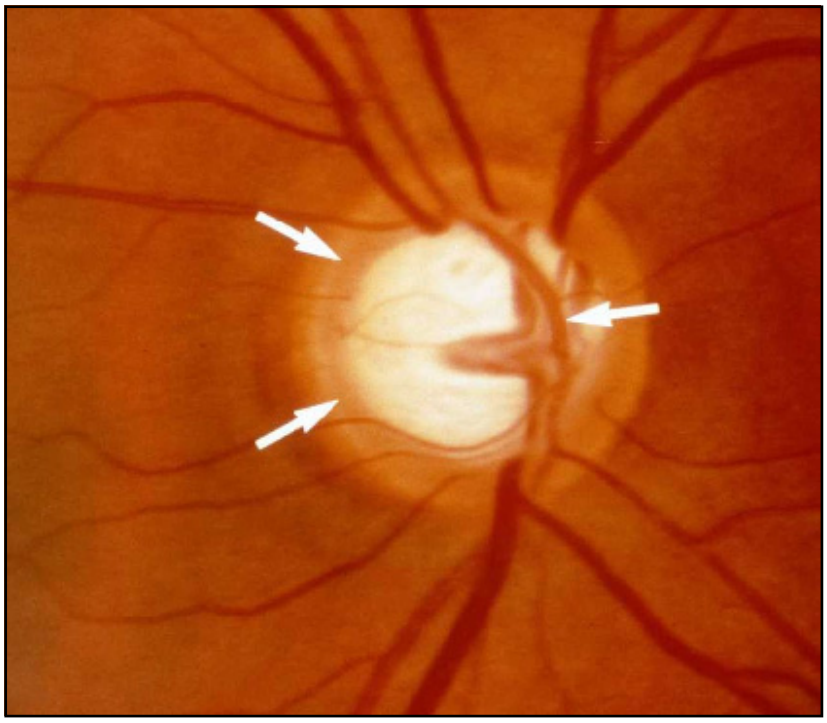
Glaucoma - Alzheimer Biomarker

Glaucoma - Alzheimer's Disease of the Eye.

Alzheimer's Disease - Glaucoma of the Brain



Glaucoma is an eye disease in which the optic nerve is damaged in a characteristic pattern. This can permanently damage vision in the affected eye(s) and lead to blindness if left untreated. It is normally thought to be associated with increased fluid pressure in the eye.

However, some may have high eye pressure for years and never develop damage, while others can develop nerve damage at a relatively low pressure.

The emerging cause of Glaucoma is inflammation, but not just of the eye, rather the whole body.

Glaucoma Stages

Glaucoma refers to a group of eye conditions that lead to damage of the optic nerve. Damage to the optic nerve is now recognized as being due to inflammation and related processes.

Glaucoma is the 2nd leading cause of blindness in the US. There are 4 major types: 1. open-angle; 2. angle closure; 3. congenital; 4. secondary.

Today this disease is treated as an "eye only" disease. However, papers with titles like this, "The Role of Inflammation in the Pathogenesis of Glaucoma," point in a new direction. And inflammation is NOT an eye-only event either. Glaucoma patients measured for inflammation show markers in their "peripheral" blood.

Glaucoma - A Sick Eye in a Sick Body

A recent review article titled "A Sick Eye in a Sick Body" showed the connection between Glaucoma and overall illness. It is now recognized as not just a disease of the eye but a serious multi-factorial neurodegenerative disease.

In 2003 research titled "Glaucoma: ocular Alzheimer's Disease" was published followed in 2010 by "Alzheimer's disease: cerebral glaucoma?"

A couple of facts are emerging. First, Glaucoma is a system-wide (whole body) disease with inflammation. Second, there is a strong connection between glaucoma and Alzheimer's. The eye is a "canary" of the brain. Glaucoma can be used as part of a screening protocol to identify those at highest future risk for Alzheimer's disease.