

Brent Community Ophthalmology Service

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Referring Patients with Raised Intra-Ocular Pressure

The 'normal' range for intraocular pressure (IOP) is 10-21mmHg. NICE issued guidance on raised IOP and suspected glaucoma cases in 2009. The following guide is based on their document.

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg85>

This guidance is for patients who are not already known to have glaucoma.

1. If the IOP is measured and confirmed to be greater than or equal to 30 mmHg the patient should be seen by an ophthalmologist within 48 hours.
2. If the IOP is between 26mmHg and 29mmHg the patient should be referred to ophthalmology clinic and seen within 2-3 weeks
3. If the IOP is 22-25mmHg the patient should be referred routinely to clinic.

Glaucoma is a condition where there is damage to the optic nerve that may cause functional loss of vision and ultimately blindness. The IOP may be within the normal range. Treatment is to lower the IOP even if the maximum presenting IOP lies within the normal range.

Ocular hypertension is a condition where the IOP is above 21mmHg but there is no evidence of structural or functional damage to the eye. Many cases do not require treatment. In some cases the air puff method of testing IOP, used widely in optometric practice, can overestimate the true IOP. This is particularly the case when the cornea is thicker than average.

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