The discovery, diagnosis, and history of treatments for glaucoma suggest that glaucoma can be traced back to three major time periods.

The first time period (400 B.C. to 1854) saw the introduction of the ophthalmoscope, which led to improved diagnosis and work on cataracts and a better understanding of the pathology of the eye. It was during this period that the Greek word ἄφθροα · ἀφθρός, a cataract, is now known as glaucoma. " and later, as a common eye condition in the elderly, it became part of all medical texts.

The second time period (1858 to 1924) was characterized by several significant developments. In 1858, Sir William Fraser was the first to use a cataract.3 In 1867, Thomas Kirkland designed the first tonometry, a device for measuring eye pressure, which was later refined by Dr. Otto Barkan in 1905. The Schiotz Tonometer, introduced in 1914 by Dr. Arthur Schiotz, became the standard for measuring eye pressure until 1957.

The third time period (1924 to 2018) saw the introduction of many new treatments for glaucoma. In 1932, Dr. Otto Barkan performed the first filtering operation for glaucoma, and in 1939, the first IOP-lowering medication, pilocarpine, was introduced. Propranolol, introduced in 1985, is now a widely used medication for glaucoma.

Concurrently, several surgical procedures were developed. In 1967, the thermal trephine was introduced, a procedure for treating glaucoma, and in 1972, the first non-penetrating surgical procedure was introduced. The trabeculectomy, introduced in 1979, is the most commonly performed surgical procedure for glaucoma.

Today, treatments for glaucoma continue to evolve, with new drugs and devices being developed to improve outcomes. The discovery, diagnosis, and history of treatments for glaucoma continue to be an important area of research, with the goal of finding a cure for this devastating disease.