



Eye Problems

Diabetic eye disease (also called diabetic retinopathy) is a serious problem that can lead to loss of sight. There's a lot you can do to take charge and prevent such problems. A recent study shows that keeping your glucose level closer to normal can prevent or delay getting diabetic eye disease. Keeping your blood pressure under control is also important. Finding and treating eye problems early can help save sight.

Protecting your sight: Keep Your Blood Glucose Under Control

High blood glucose can damage your eyes as time goes by. Work with your health care team to keep your glucose levels as close to normal as you can.

Keep Your Blood Pressure Under Control

High blood pressure can damage your eyes. Have your health care provider check your blood pressure at every doctor's appointment.

Get Regular Eye Exams

Even if you're seeing fine, you need regular, complete eye exams to protect your sight. Ask your health care provider to help you find an eye doctor who cares for people with diabetes. Before the exam, a doctor or nurse will put drops in your eyes to dilate the pupils.

(over, please.)

You should have your eyes dilated and examined once a year. Even if you've lost your sight from diabetic eye disease, you still need to have regular eye care. If you haven't already had a complete eye exam, you should have one now if any of these conditions apply to you:

- You've had Type 1 diabetes for 5 or more years.
- You have Type 2 diabetes.
- You're going through puberty and you have diabetes.
- You're pregnant and you have diabetes.
- You're planning to become pregnant and you have diabetes.
- You just had a baby (in the last year) and you have diabetes.

Discuss Your Physical Activity Plan

If you have diabetic eye disease, talk with your health care provider about the kind of physical activity that is best for you.

Signs of Diabetic Eye Disease

Diabetic eye disease may be starting even when your sight is good. Regular eye exams are important early. Some people may notice signs of vision changes. You may have eye problems if:

- You're having trouble reading.
- Your vision is blurred.
- You're seeing rings around lights, seeing dark spots or seeing flashing lights.

Be sure to tell your health care team or eye doctor about any eye problems you may have.

Sources: *Indiana Chronic Disease Management Program*
American Diabetes Association