

What are the benefits of early detection?

Early detection gives you more options to help protect your vision. **Get a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once a year, even if you don't have any symptoms.** Diabetic eye disease can be detected early and treated before noticeable vision loss occurs.

Be aware that a vision screening is not the same as a comprehensive dilated eye exam. Talk to your primary care provider to make sure you are screened correctly.

Early detection, timely treatment & appropriate follow-up care can reduce the risk of severe vision loss by 95%.



Don't let diabetes steal your sight

Did you know that diabetes can cause eye disease? If left untreated, it can cause vision loss or even blindness.



For more information on the importance of getting screened for diabetic eye disease, talk to your primary care provider, or visit: nei.nih.gov



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What is diabetic eye disease?

Diabetic eye disease refers to several eye problems people with diabetes may get, all of which can lead to vision loss or blindness.

Diabetic Retinopathy

This is a leading cause of blindness in people with diabetes. It usually affects both eyes and occurs when there is damage to blood vessels in the retina.



Cataracts

This is a clouding of the lens in the eye that affects vision. Most cataracts are related to aging and are very common in older people.



Glaucoma

This causes damage to the optic nerve and can affect one or both eyes.



Who is at risk?

All people with diabetes, **both type 1 and type 2**, are at risk. The longer you have diabetes, the greater your risk of getting diabetic eye disease.

In the early stages, there may be no symptoms or pain.

Over time, more than half of people with diabetes will develop diabetic retinopathy. Get a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once a year.

Why should I get checked?

In the early stages, many times there are no symptoms or pain. A person may not notice vision changes until the disease advances. By getting checked for diabetic eye disease regularly, you can help detect it early and get treated before noticeable vision loss occurs.

How is it detected and treated?

Diabetic retinopathy is detected through a comprehensive dilated eye exam. During the exam, drops are placed in your eyes to widen, or dilate, the pupils. A special lens is used to look for damage to blood vessels. Laser eye treatment can slow or stop the progression of diabetic retinopathy.

Can I prevent it?

You can dramatically slow or prevent the development of this eye disease by keeping your blood sugar, blood pressure, and blood cholesterol under control and having comprehensive eye exams yearly.

Help prevent it further by:

- Taking your medications
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Staying active
- Not smoking