



How does diabetes affect your eyes?

Did you know that diabetes can affect your eyes? If diabetes isn't well controlled, it can cause problems that can lead to vision loss and even blindness. Eye problems that are caused by diabetes are called diabetic eye disease.

Getting regular checkups and following your doctor's recommendations for managing your diabetes will greatly reduce your risk of these problems. Most people with well-controlled diabetes can keep their eyes healthy.

Diabetic eye disease includes:

- Diabetic retinopathy
- Diabetic macular edema (DME)
- Cataracts
- Glaucoma



LINK BETWEEN DIABETES & THE EYES

When blood sugar is too high, especially if it stays high over time, it can change or damage the delicate blood vessels in the eyes. This can lead to too much pressure in the eye, bleeding in the eye or swelling in some of the eye's important tissues.

Diabetic eye disease is dangerous because many people don't know they have it. These eye problems may have no signs or symptoms at first. Then, a person may start to lose their vision after eye damage has already occurred. Unfortunately, it is harder to treat these problems at a later stage.

CONTROL DIABETES

- Take your medications as prescribed by your doctor.
- Monitor blood sugar levels at home as often as your doctor recommends.
- Get regular physical activity.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Work toward a healthy weight.
- Don't smoke. If you do smoke, keep trying to quit.
- Get a full eye exam at least once a year, including an exam that includes dilating of the eyes.

The diabetes ABCs are important measures of good diabetes control. Your ABCs are:

- **A = A1C**, which is a blood sugar (glucose) measurement. Your doctor can test this. Most people should have an A1C below 7 percent. This should be checked every 3-6 months.
- **B = Blood pressure**, which should be checked at each doctor appointment. Discuss your blood pressure target with your doctor.
- **C = Cholesterol**, which may need to be checked yearly or more often. Ask your doctor about a healthy cholesterol goal.