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## REASONS

# to get a diabetic eye exam

People with diabetes are at risk for eye disease, leading to vision loss or blindness. Diabetic retinopathy, cataracts and glaucoma are common eye diseases affecting people with diabetes. Early detection can prevent blindness. Here are some tips for protecting your eyes:

1

**Diabetic retinopathy** is a leading cause of blindness in people with diabetes. This is caused when blood vessels in the retina increase in number or weaken and leak fluid or bleed, causing blurred vision. There are often times no symptoms or pain in the early stages.

2

A cloudy eye lens, which blurs your vision, is caused by **cataracts**. **Glaucoma** causes damage to the optic nerve, leading to vision loss. People with diabetes are two times more likely to develop these diseases than those without diabetes.

3

An annual diabetic eye exam can find and detect progression of **diabetic retinopathy**. Laser surgery and injections of medications have prevented vision loss in diabetics who visit eye care professionals.

4

**Cataracts** and **glaucoma** are more common in diabetics and can also be detected at annual eye exams and treated with medications or surgery.

5

**Know your diabetes ABCs.** Talk to your doctor about how to manage your **A1C** (blood sugar or glucose), **B**lood pressure and **C**holesterol to help prevent eye diseases as well as reduce to your chances of having a stroke, heart attack or other diabetes problems.

6

Keep your doctor updated on your health. If you experience a sudden change in vision notify your doctor immediately. Monitoring of your diabetes will help catch any changes or complications before things get serious. Be honest about changes in your health so your doctor can best advise you.

*If you have any changes in vision, contact your doctor immediately! Being proactive can save your vision.*

This health alert is brought to you by:



Sources: National Eye Institute, National Institutes of Health; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

These items are provided solely for informational purposes and are not intended as a substitute for consultation with a medical professional. Patients with any specific questions about the items on this list or their individual health should consult their physician.

