



Did you know that diabetes can affect your eyes?

When you have diabetes it's important to exercise, watch what you eat, and check your blood sugar levels. But did you know you also need to see an eye doctor to have your vision checked?

Diabetes can lead to several eye problems

Diabetes is the leading cause of new cases of blindness in adults ages 18-64.¹ The best way to find any problems and keep your eyes healthy is to get regular eye exams and let your doctor know if you have diabetes. Diabetes can lead to several eye problems including:

Cataracts

A clouding of the normally clear lens in the eye that makes it hard for people to see. This problem is usually connected to aging but diabetes increases the chance of cataracts, especially at a younger age. Your eye doctor can work with you on a treatment plan before your quality of life is changed.

Glaucoma

Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases that damage the optic nerve, caused by too much pressure in the eye. People with diabetes are twice as likely to develop open-angle glaucoma. If left untreated, it can cause blindness. Early treatment can slow this illness and save your vision.

More than

11%

of the United States population have diabetes.¹

Diabetic Retinopathy

This common eye disease is the leading cause of blindness in working-age adults.¹ It causes blood vessels to leak or grow abnormally in the retina (the part of the eye that sees light), causing blurry vision or stopping blood flow. Diabetic retinopathy is often not noticed because you may not have early symptoms. Your eye doctor can see it during a comprehensive dilated eye exam. Treatment can start before your sight is affected, which helps prevent vision loss.

Dry eye

Burning, itchy, red eyes can be caused by dry eyes, and you may make less tears with diabetes. Dry eyes can make you feel uncomfortable, blur your vision, and in some cases can even damage the eye and result in vision loss. Your eye doctor can help you with options to keep your eyes healthy.

Ways to prevent or manage diabetic eye problems²

- Get a comprehensive dilated eye examination at least once a year
- Control your blood sugar
- Maintain healthy blood pressure and cholesterol levels
- Quit smoking
- Exercise

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¹ Prevent Blindness "Prevent Blindness Offers Videos, Fact Sheets, Social Media Graphics and PowerPoint Presentations to Educate Public on the Potential Effects that Diabetes may Have on Vision.": <https://preventblindness.org/diabetes-related-eye-disease-awareness-2022>, Accessed April 2025

² AAO "Prevent Diabetic Eye Disease in 5 Steps": <https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/top-five-diabetes-steps>, Accessed April 2025

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