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DIABETES EYE CARE

Improper blood sugar control can cause damage to the blood vessels in your eyes, a condition called diabetic retinopathy. It may lead to frequent fluctuations in vision, cataract, decreased vision, temporary paralysis of the muscles controlling the movement of eyes. In worst cases, untreated retinopathy can cause blindness

Retinopathy, what leads to it?

Retina is the layer at the back of the eye that is sensitive to light. It contains small blood vessels which can be damaged if diabetes is not well controlled.

Diabetes can lead to -

- P Fluid accumulation in the Macula (a part of the retina which allows one to see fine details), thus reducing the vision.
- In the advanced stages, blood supply to the retina is compromised.
- Sometimes the retinal blood vessels rupture causing bleeding in the vitreous (the clear jell-like substance that fills the center of the eye, resulting in blurred vision.
- The new blood vessels and the bleed into the vitreous can also cause scar tissue, which can pull the retina away from the back of the eye, a condition known as retinal detachment.
- Retinal detachment can lead to blindness if left untreated.

Preventing Diabetic Retinopathy

If you have diabetes, get a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once a year. Diabetic retinopathy patients may require eye exam more often. Timely

treatment and appropriate follow-up care can reduce the risk of blindness by about 95%.

Some useful tips for prevention of diabetic retinopathy include –

- Maintain healthy blood sugar levels
- Keep blood pressure under control
- Engage in regular physical activity
- Go for regular eye check up
- Eat a healthy, balanced, nutritious diet
- Don't smoke
- Limit or completely avoid alcohol intake
- Take your medication regularly and as prescribed by your doctor
- Do not miss doctor visits
- Tell your doctor about medications that you may be taking for other health problems

Symptoms of Diabetic Retinopathy

The symptoms, including pain are not seen at the early stages of diabetic retinopathy. However, the patients are advised a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once a year irrespective of the symptom appearance.

The common symptoms seen with diabetic retinopathy include-

- Blurry vision that continues for more than 2 days
- Sudden loss of vision in one or both eyes
- Eye pain
- Imagining seeing flashing lights
- Appearance of black or gray spots that move when you move your eyes

The COMPREHENSIVE EYE EXAM is simple and includes the following steps :-

- Visual acuity test which uses a chart test to measure vision from varying distances.
- Dilated eye exam where the pupils are dilated and the signs of the disease are examined.
- Tonometry which is an instrument that measures the pressure inside the eye
- Fundoscopy

Normal Vision



Vision with Diabetic Retinopathy

