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**FLORIDA EYE STRESSES THE IMPORTANCE OF ANNUAL EYE EXAMS FOR DIABETICS
ESPECIALLY DURING NOVEMBER, DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH**

Boynton Beach FL, November 1st, 2013... Almost 30 million Americans age 20 and older have diabetes, and what's even more startling is that just about one third of these people are at risk for vision loss because they do not even know they have the disease.

"This is a tragedy waiting to happen because anyone with diabetes can develop diabetic retinopathy, a degenerative disease of the retina (the sensitive area at the back of the eye) which affects 5.3 million Americans age 18 and older," said [Randy Katz, M.D., Florida Eye Microsurgical Institute's Retinal, Diabetic Retinopathy and Macular Degeneration Specialist.](#)

According to Dr. Katz, more than one third of those diagnosed with diabetes forgo a dilated eye exam every year, but *anyone* with the disease should get a dilated eye exam each and every year without fail. "Also - pregnant women with diabetes should have an eye exam in the first trimester, since diabetic eye disease can progress rapidly during pregnancy."

"The longer a person has diabetes, the greater the risk for developing diabetic retinopathy," added Dr. Katz, who also pointed out that diabetic retinopathy does not only affect people who have had the disease. "For some people, diabetic retinopathy is diagnosed before a patient even knows he or she has diabetes."

Fluctuations in blood sugar levels can temporarily affect vision, so it's sometimes difficult to know if a serious eye problem is developing. That's one of the reasons strict control of a diabetic's blood sugar is so important, said Dr. Katz. "If a diabetic notices a vision change in one eye, a change that lasts more than a day or two or changes not associated with fluctuations in blood sugar, call your ophthalmologist immediately."

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Dr. Katz also recommends calling your ophthalmologist as soon as possible if:

- your vision becomes blurry
- you have trouble reading signs or books
- you see double
- one or both of your eyes hurt
- your eyes get red and stay that way
- you feel pressure in your eye
- you see spots or floaters
- straight lines do not look straight
- you can't see things at the side as you used to

For more information on diabetic retinopathy and/or to watch educational videos: fleyedocs.com.

For specific statistics on diabetes in general: [American Diabetes Association](http://AmericanDiabetesAssociation.org).

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[The Florida Eye Microsurgical Institute](#) offers a full range of comprehensive ophthalmologic care, including routine eye care and examinations, pediatric eye care, dry eyes, advanced corneal, retinal and cataract procedures, laser treatments, glaucoma and diabetic procedures, and various other sophisticated treatments. With its own pediatric wing and [fully accredited outpatient surgical center in Boynton Beach](#), the Institute has additional offices in Boca Raton, Wellington and Juno Beach. Also at Florida Eye with Dr. Katz is [Dr. Barry Schechter, Director of Cornea & Cataract Services, Glaucoma, External Disease & Comprehensive Ophthalmology](#), [Dr. Lee Friedman, Pediatric, ROP & Adult Strabismus Specialist](#) and [Dr. Jason Gorscak, Refractive Cataract Surgery, Glaucoma & Comprehensive Ophthalmologic Care](#).

Florida Eye is [a premier center for national clinical trial studies](#). For information on current or future studies contact [Debbie Rankin](#) or call (561) 736-5055.

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