



FLORIDA EYE

Microsurgical Institute, Inc.

TOTAL EYE CARE UNDER ONE ROOF

Are You at Risk for Developing Diabetic Retinopathy?



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If You Have Diabetes, You Are at Risk for Developing Diabetic Retinopathy

FACT: Diabetic Retinopathy is the leading cause of blindness among working-age Americans.

FACT: Each year, 12,000 to 24,000 people lose their sight due to diabetes.

FACT: Your risk of developing diabetic retinopathy increases with the number of years you've had diabetes. After 15 years with the disease, almost 80 percent of people with Type 1 diabetes have some form of diabetic eye disease.

FACT: Diabetic Retinopathy can also appear within the first year or two after the onset of the disease. For some people, diabetic retinopathy is one of the first signs they have diabetes.

FACT: Early detection and treatment of diabetic retinopathy can usually prevent permanent vision loss.



"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). The best way to prevent the disease from evolving is to have your eyes examined annually. I can't stress the importance of those yearly exams enough. A routine eye exam truly can save your vision." — *Dr. Randy Katz, M.D., Macular Degeneration, Diabetic Retinopathy & Medical/Surgical Retina Specialist*

Understanding the Importance of Annual Exams for Diabetic Retinopathy

Diabetic retinopathy can develop in anyone who has type 1 diabetes or type 2 diabetes. The condition generally develops slowly over a period of months as ongoing high blood sugar levels damage the blood vessels of the retina. **In the disease's infancy, there may be no noticeable symptoms.**

This is why a yearly exam is vital. Every day visual changes may not be obvious – you may be driving, reading, working with no notice of any sight impairment, however, physical changes in the retina and the blood vessels of the retina could be beginning – changes that would only be detected during an eye examination. And because symptoms may not be apparent until late stages of diabetic retinopathy, regular eye examinations are crucial to catching the condition in its early stage.

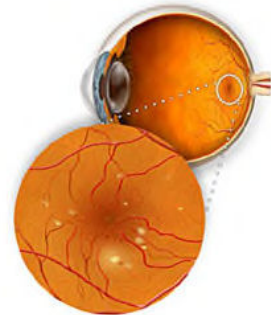
Even if you are deemed healthy by your endocrinologist and/or internist, you should have your eyes checked by a retinal specialist. A typical exam includes a visual acuity test, pupil dilation, ophthalmoscopy and tonometry tests.

Diabetic Retinopathy: Five Symptoms & Signs

1

Retinal Changes

Even though a patient may have no vision impairment, retinal changes noticed during a vision exam can be symptoms of diabetic retinopathy. These changes include retinal swelling, blood vessels leaking fluids, and any scar tissue or abnormal deposits on the retina. The leakage causes accumulations of yellowish proteins and fatty substances.



2

Floaters

Floaters are small shadows cast on the retina by tiny floating cells of vitreous gel as the vitreous pulls away from the back of the eye. Blood cells that have leaked into the vitreous can also lead to floaters. Floaters are manifested as small spots that are suspended or move around within the line of vision. They can also create a



"spider web" effect, which gives the impression of looking through a mesh of thin fibers.

3 Spotty, Blurry, or Hazy Vision

When floaters become more plentiful in the vitreous, and microaneurysms cause blood and other fluid to leak into the retina, vision becomes increasingly impaired. Patients lose the ability to see objects with great detail, and often have difficulty driving at night or experience blind spots in parts of their visual field.



4 Difficulty Reading or Seeing Close Up

When the retina is damaged, it often distorts the eye's ability to focus on things close-up. Reading, sewing, writing and other activities requiring adequate focusing power become more and more difficult. Although this type of vision impairment is typical as the body ages, it is also one of the primary symptoms of diabetic retinopathy.

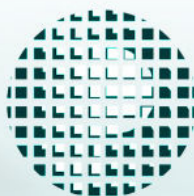


5 Corneal Abnormalities

The slow healing of wounds due to corneal abrasions (typically due to minor trauma) can also be indicative of diabetic retinopathy.



In more advanced stages of diabetic neuropathy, serious complications can result, including permanent vision loss, retinal detachment and blindness. If you experience sudden vision changes or your vision becomes blurry, spotty or hazy, contact your doctor right away.



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Florida Eye Microsurgical Institute offers a full range of total eye care, including routine examinations, pediatric eye care, dry eye, advanced corneal, retinal and cataract procedures, laser treatments, glaucoma, diabetic procedures and various other sophisticated treatments. With its own pediatric wing and fully accredited outpatient surgical center in Boynton Beach, the Institute also has offices in Wellington, Boca Raton and Juno Beach.

Florida Eye enjoys a reputation as the premier center for clinical trials of breakthrough therapies nationwide. At any given time we are conducting studies in a variety of conditions such as Wet and Dry AMD and Diabetic Retinopathy. For information on current or future studies contact Margo Dague, our study coordinator, at (561) 736-5055 or via email at margo@fleyedocs.com. You can also visit our site at fleyedocs.com.



DR. FRIEDMAN



DR. KATZ



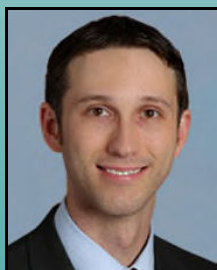
DR. SCHECHTER



DR. GORSCAK



DR. CRISS



DR. NEZGODA

Wellington

2575 State Road 7
Wellington, FL 33414
(561) 792-1205

Boca Raton

9980 Central Park Blvd
Suite 204
Boca Raton, FL 33428
(561) 451-4514

Boynton Beach

1717 Woolbright Road
Boynton Beach,
FL 33426
(561) 737-5500

Juno Beach

13901 U.S. Hwy 1
Suite 7
Juno Beach, FL 33408
(561) 748-8230
(Pediatrics Only)

