



FLORIDA EYE
Microsurgical Institute, Inc.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NOVEMBER IS DIABETIC EYE DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH

**LOCAL OPHTHALMOLOGIST STRESSES THE IMPORTANCE OF ANNUAL EYE EXAMS TO PRESERVE SIGHT
AND OUTLINES SPECIAL VISION GUIDELINES FOR DIABETICS**

Boynton Beach, FL, October 24, 2011... There are approximately 29 million Americans age 18 and older that have diabetes and almost one third of those are at risk for vision loss because they do not know they have the disease.

Those numbers make Randy Katz, M.D., Florida Eye Microsurgical Institute's Retinal, Diabetic Retinopathy and Macular Degeneration Specialist very upset. "This is a tragedy waiting to happen because people 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."

According to Dr. Katz, "More than one third of those diagnosed with diabetes do not adhere to vision care guidelines by forgoing a dilated eye exam every year. So, as part of November's Diabetic Eye Disease Awareness Month, I am urging Americans with diabetes to get a dilated eye exam this year, and every year. 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, says Dr. Katz,, who also points out that diabetic retinopathy does not only affect people who have had the disease. For some people, diabetic retinopathy is one of the first signs of the disease.

What are the signs to look for? 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, says 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."

"The best way to prevent the disease from evolving is to have your eyes examined annually," says Dr. Katz. "I can't stress the importance of those yearly exams enough. A routine eye exam truly can save your vision."

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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, the Institute's Refractive Cataract Surgery, Glaucoma, Cornea & External Disease Specialist, Dr. Lee Friedman, FL Eye's Pediatric, ROP & Adult Strabismus Specialist, Dr. Jonathan Chua, General Ophthalmology, and Dr. Jason Gorscak, Comprehensive Ophthalmology. For more information on Diabetes and Eye Care, the Institute, its physicians and current clinical trials, please contact Gwen Cohan at (561) 736-5050 and visit www.fleyedocs.com.

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Florida Eye & The American Diabetes Association offers these steps to avoid eye problems...

First and most important, keep your blood sugar levels under tight control.

Second, bring high blood pressure under control.

Third, quit smoking.

Fourth, see your eye care professional at least once a year for a dilated eye exam.

Fifth, see your eye care professional 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.

When to See an Eye Care Professional

- If you are between 10 and 29 years old and have had diabetes for at least 5 years, you should have an annual dilated eye exam.
- If you are 30 or older, you should have an annual dilated eye exam, no matter how short a time you have had diabetes. More frequent exams may be needed if you have eye disease.
- If you have any changes in your vision.
- You should have a dilated eye exam if you are pregnant or planning to get pregnant.

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Randy Katz, M.D.
Florida Eye Microsurgical Institute's Retinal,
Diabetic Retinopathy & Macular Degeneration Specialist



Normal Vision



Vision impaired by Diabetic Retinopathy



Dr. Katz reviews a patient's retinal images



Examining a patient...



The Doctors of Florida Eye



Florida Eye Microsurgical Institute

For more information or to speak with Dr. Randy Katz, please contact Gwen Cohan, Marketing & PR Director of Florida Eye at gwen@fleyedocs.com or (561)736-5050.