

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ...

DIABETIC EYE DISEASE

Approximately 16 million Americans have diabetes. And half are at risk for vision loss because they don't know they have the disease.

Diabetic eye disease, a group of eye problems that affect those with diabetes, includes diabetic retinopathy, cataracts and glaucoma. The most common of these is diabetic retinopathy.

Diabetic retinopathy is a potentially vision threatening condition in which the blood vessels inside the retina become damaged from the high blood sugar levels associated with diabetes.

8,000  
Americans  
are blinded  
each year by  
diabetic  
retinopathy

Because there are often no symptoms in the early stages of diabetic retinopathy, your vision may not be affected until the disease becomes severe. You should see your Eye M.D. promptly if you experience visual changes that:

- Affect only one eye
- Last more than a few days
- Are not associated with a change in blood sugar

Diabetes can also affect your vision by causing cataracts and glaucoma. If you have diabetes, you are likely to get cataracts at a younger age and your chances of developing glaucoma are doubled.

More than one third of those diagnosed with diabetes don't get recommended vision care and may be at risk for blindness. Once diagnosed with diabetes, schedule a complete dilated eye examination with your Eye M.D. at least once a year.

Early diagnosis of diabetes and the effective control of blood sugar levels and hypertension through diet and exercise can help control eye diseases associated with diabetes.

See your Eye M.D. ... because there's so much more to see.

An Eye M.D. is an ophthalmologist – a medical doctor who provides the full spectrum of eye and vision care. From eye glasses to contact lenses, to medication and surgery, your Eye M.D. will help you keep your sight for life.

*Find an Eye M.D. at [www.aao.org](http://www.aao.org)*