

# Diabetes and Your Vision

## No one should go blind from diabetes

If you are among the 15 million Americans with diabetes, you have a 50% chance of having some signs of **diabetic retinopathy**, the leading cause of preventable blindness in adults under age 75.

The longer you have diabetes, the more likely it is you'll develop diabetic retinopathy. Initially, most people with diabetic retinopathy experience no vision problems, pain or redness. This is why screening for diabetic eye disease is crucial. The condition can worsen quickly and threaten your vision if not treated.

With early detection and treatment, the risk of severe vision loss from diabetic retinopathy is small. If you have diabetes, these steps can help protect your sight.

- Get regular eye exams even if your sight is fine. You are at risk for cataract and glaucoma, as well as diabetic retinopathy.
- Control your blood sugar. Widely fluctuating sugar can harm the retina.
- Monitor and control your blood pressure. High blood pressure works with diabetes to damage your retina.
- If you are pregnant and have diabetes, see an eye doctor early on.
- Don't smoke.
- Control your cholesterol.
- Reduce stress. Stress hormones can adversely impact retinopathy.

When treatment is needed, **Bloomberg Eye Center** offers a full range of services, from the latest imaging and diagnostic tools to laser treatment and advanced vitreoretinal surgical procedures that help save sight. With recent advances in retinal research, we can now offer pharmacologic (non-laser) treatments for some of the more severe complications of diabetic retinopathy. As with anything in medicine, the best cure is prevention.



Shahin Shahinfar, MD, Medical Director, Bloomberg Eye Center

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**For more information on diabetic retinopathy and treatment options, please call or visit our website.**

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