4 REASONS to get a diabetic eye exam

People with diabetes are at risk of eye disease, leading to vision loss or blindness. Diabetic retinopathy, cataracts and glaucoma are common eye diseases affecting people with diabetes. Early detection can prevent blindness. Here are some tips for protecting your eyes:

1. A leading cause of blindness in people with diabetes, **diabetic retinopathy** is a blood vessel injury in the retina (back of the eye) due to prolonged high blood sugar. The blood vessels can increase in number or weaken and leak fluid or blood which may cause blurred vision. There are often no symptoms or pain in the early stages – an annual diabetic eye exam can detect early changes to the eye.

2. A cloudy eye lens, which blurs vision, is caused by **cataracts.** Regular eye exams can catch cataracts early and monitor when surgery may be needed to repair your vision. **Glaucoma** causes increased pressure and damage of the optic nerve, leading to vision loss. Eye exams measure pressure in the eye. *People with diabetes are 2x more likely to develop these diseases than those without diabetes.*

3. **Know your diabetes ABCs.** Talk to your doctor about how to manage your **A**1C (blood sugar or glucose), **B**lood pressure and **C**holesterol to help prevent eye diseases and reduce your risk of having a stroke, heart attack or other diabetes problems.

4. **Keep your doctor updated on your health.** If you experience a sudden change in vision notify your doctor immediately. Monitoring your diabetes will help catch any changes or complications before things get serious. Be honest about changes in your health so your doctor can best advise you. Many diabetes related eye diseases can be treated or slowed if caught early.

If you have any changes in your vision, contact your doctor immediately! Being proactive can save your vision.

This health alert is brought to you by:

TPA THE PHYSICIAN ALLIANCE

Sources: National Eye Institute, National Institutes of Health; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

These items are provided solely for informational purposes and are not intended as a substitute for consultation with a medical professional. Patients with any specific questions about the items on this list or their individual health should consult their physician. 2025