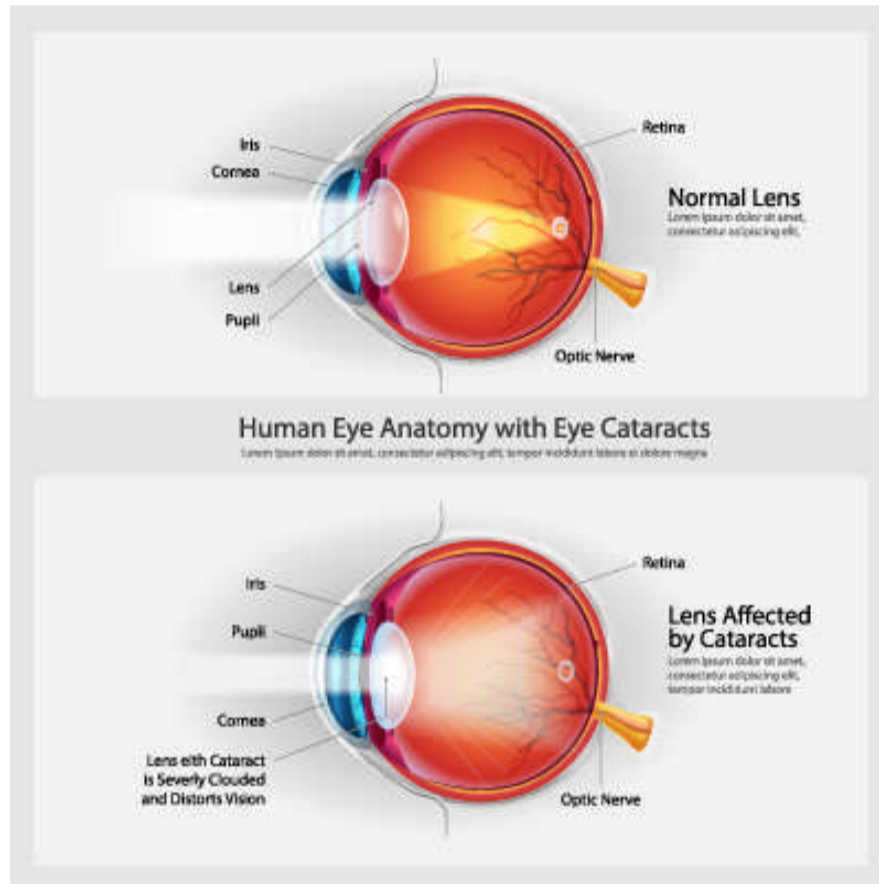


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disease awareness

DIABETIC EYE DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH

written by Healthplusthemag | November 8, 2019



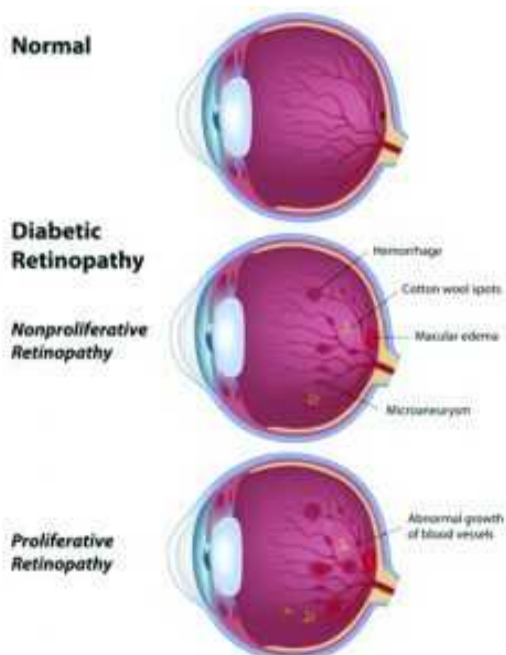
November has been declared as Diabetic Eye Disease Awareness Month and aims to bring awareness and to educate the public on the effects of diabetes on vision, risk factors and treatment options. If you have diabetes, the prevention of eye diseases related to diabetes is a priority as these can cause you to have trouble reading, seeing faces across the room, seeing at night, or even blindness.

How does diabetes affect my eyes?

Diabetes affects your eyes when your blood sugar is too high. Occasional high blood sugar can change fluid levels or cause swelling in the tissues of your eyes which can cause blurred vision. This blurry vision is temporary and goes away when your blood sugar levels normalize.

If your blood sugar stays high over a longer period of time, it can damage the tiny blood vessels in the back of your eyes.

Most serious diabetic eye diseases begin with blood vessel problems. The longer a person has diabetes, the greater the risk of developing these diseases.



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leak or bleed. If left untreated, it damages the retina and can cause blindness. Trinidad Eye Hospital offers free Diabetic Retinopathy screening for all diabetics. Screening allows for changes to be detected before you notice any changes in your vision. Early detection and appropriate intervention could prevent over 90% of diabetics from going blind.



Diabetic Macular Edema

The macular is the part of your retina that is required for reading, driving and seeing faces. Diabetes can cause swelling in the macula and results in diabetic eye disease – Diabetic Macular Edema. Left untreated, Diabetic Macular Edema can destroy the sharp vision in this part of the eye, leading to partial vision loss or blindness.

Glaucoma

Diabetes doubles the chances of having glaucoma. Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases where increased pressure in the eyes can damage the optic nerve—the bundle of nerves that connects the eye to the brain. Glaucoma is often dubbed “the silent thief of sight” as it can do irreparable damage without any signs or symptoms.

Cataracts

People with diabetes can develop cataracts earlier than people without diabetes. A cataract is an eye disease where the lenses within our eyes tend to become cloudy as we age.

Symptoms & Treatment

Often there are no early symptoms of diabetic eye disease.

There may be no pain or no change in vision.

The good news is that diabetic eye diseases can often be prevented or managed with a healthy lifestyle, medication and annual visits to an eye doctor. Diabetics can dramatically slow or prevent the development of these eye diseases by following these simple steps:

- Control blood sugar levels
- Control cholesterol
- Control blood pressure levels
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Exercise
- Quit smoking
- Visit your eye care specialist

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