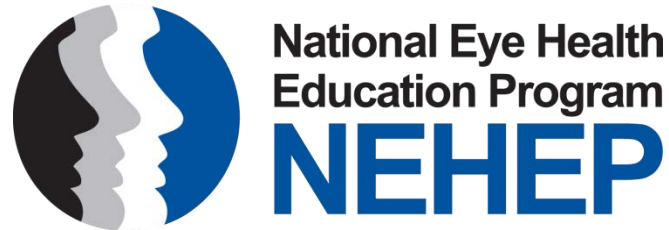


Preventing vision loss and blindness:

What people with diabetes know about their eyes

Results from nationwide focus groups



Today's presenters



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Diabetes today

- 26 million people affected.
- 79 million with pre-diabetes.
- All people with diabetes at risk for diabetic eye disease.
- Diabetic eye disease is a serious complication of diabetes.
 - Leading cause of vision loss and blindness in adults ages 20-74.

What is diabetic eye disease?

DIABETIC RETINOPATHY



Normal vision Vision with DR

- Most common form of diabetic eye disease.
- Diabetes damages the blood vessels in the retina, the light-sensitive tissue at the back of the eye.

CATARACT



Normal vision Vision with Cataract

- Clouding of the lens of the eye.

GLAUCOMA



Normal vision Vision with Glaucoma

- Increase in fluid pressure inside the eye that leads to optic nerve damage and loss of vision.

Preventing vision loss

- People with diabetes should have a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once a year.
- No early warning signs or symptoms.
- 90% of vision loss can be prevented.
- In addition to eye exams, keep your health on **TRACK:**



Take your medications.

Reach and maintain a healthy weight.

Add physical activity to your daily routine.

Control your blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol.

Kick the smoking habit.



Purpose of the focus groups

Gather information from people with diabetes on the following:

- Importance of eye health
- Knowledge of diabetic eye disease
- Sources of eye health information
- Health information preferences



The surveyed



Eye health

- Participants aware of impact of diabetes on their vision:
 - Blurry vision
 - Deterioration of vision over time
 - Blindness
 - Intense light
 - Headaches
 - Tunnel vision and dimness



Knowledge

- Doctors direct in telling risk of losing vision due to diabetes.
- Lack of familiarity with the term “diabetic eye disease.”
- Many recognize it is a serious health problem that needs to be treated.



Their “symptoms”

Tunnel vision

Reduced field of vision

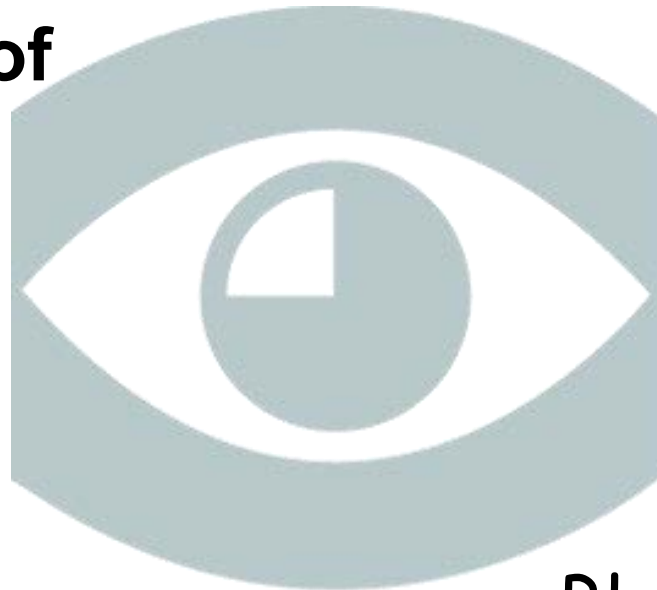
Headaches

Flashing lights

Blindness

Floaters

Blurred Vision



Prevention

Awareness

- *“Diabetic eye disease cannot be prevented, just treated.”*

Some knowledge

- *“Diabetic eye disease can be treated by cooperation between ophthalmologists and primary care physicians.”*

Understanding

- *“It can be prevented with drops, surgery, medication controls, and diet.”*

Distrust

- *“Drink lots of water or have a water purifier.”*
- *“Not sure if certain tests are necessary.”*
- *“Getting a second opinion if I don’t like results.”*

Treatment

KNOWLEDGE

- Awareness of treatment options.
- Awareness it can be treated.
- A balancing act.

BELIEFS

- No treatment options for diabetic eye disease.
- Blindness inevitable.
- “At eye exam, doctor can’t detect disease. I notice if vision is blurrier.”

What they said

Biggest concerns

- *“Losing eye sight.”*
- *“Not knowing if it’s going to get worse.”*
- *“Possibility of blindness.”*
- *“Lack of vision without glasses.”*
- *“If I can’t see, I can’t work.”*
- *“Independence and mobility.”*



What they said

Reasons to keep diabetes under control

- *“Don’t want to lose my vision.”*
- *“I just want to live.”*
- *“The possibility of what can happen; get all the bad things down.”*
- *“My general health, vision.”*
- *“Have a “normal life”.”*
- *“Knowing people who have had eye problems.”*
- *“Being self-sufficient.”*



Key findings from diabetes groups

Caucasian

- Awareness of relationship between diabetes and eye health, but no familiarity with term “diabetic eye disease.”
- More emphasis on vision in diabetes education programs, materials.
- Information from doctors and family members in health professions.
- Better communication *between* health providers to improve health care for patients.

Spanish-speaking H/L

- Onset of diabetes a wake-up call for many.
- Little knowledge of diabetic eye disease.
- Information from doctors and others with diabetes.
- Some comfort with doctors.
- Some discrimination by non-Hispanic doctors.

African American

- Vision of high importance.
- Lack of knowledge regarding consequences of diabetes and eye health.
- Some familiarity with terms “diabetic eye disease” and “diabetic retinopathy.”
- General perception that diabetic eye disease can’t be prevented.
- Cost of eye care of concern.

Their suggestions

Caucasian

- More education on vision and latest treatments for eye diseases.
- Importance of a good doctor/patient relationship for managing diabetes.
- Decreased wait time and “whole ordeal” of dilating, waiting, then waiting for the eyes to get back to normal.
- Visual aids on what happens to eyes after diabetes to help explain the importance of managing the condition.

Spanish-speaking H/L

- More affordable eye care services.
- Improvement in way eye care professionals communicate with patients.
- Appreciation of doctors who understand them.
- Information on diabetes through video and print materials helpful when newly diagnosed.

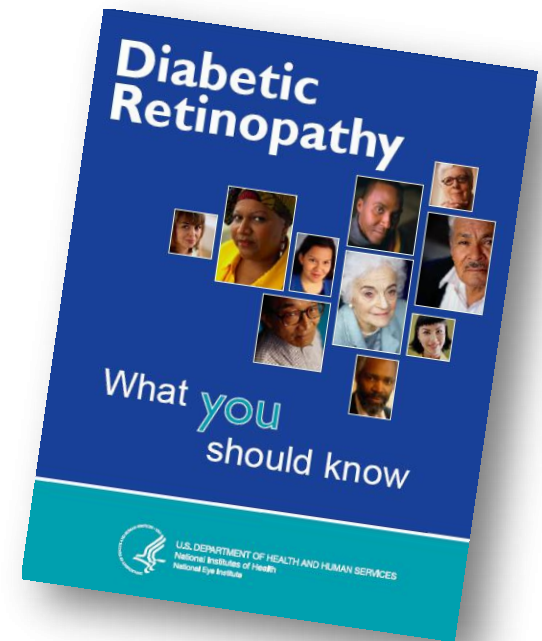
African American

- Better doctor/patient relationship, from extra time with patients to interest and followup.
- More information on eye health and education.
- Print materials.
- Non-traditional outreach, like pharmacies.
- Community events and coordinated efforts with diabetes groups.

Whom do they trust?

Sources of eye health information

- Physicians
- Diabetes specialists
- Newsletters from insurance companies
- Google
- Friends and family with diabetes
- Videos at doctors' offices
- Supermarkets
- Nurses
- Ophthalmologists
- Pamphlets
- Magazines
- Radio
- WebMD



Where do they seek information?

Their health information preferences

- Doctors' offices
- Support groups
- *Diabetic Living*
- National Public Radio
- American Diabetes Association
- Church
- Magazines
- Internet
 - Google, Mayo Clinic, WebMD, Wikipedia
- Information in Spanish
- Dr. Oz show

Opportunities for increasing eye health knowledge

- More eye health information from doctors.
 - More patient materials, videos.
 - Newsletters.
 - E-mails.
 - Reminders, calls.
- Facilitation of behavior change and advocacy through participant knowledge.
 - Information in the hands of the community.
 - Brochures.
 - Resources in Spanish.



We can prevent vision loss from diabetes.

Diabetic eye disease has no warning signs and can lead to blindness. A dilated eye exam is the only way to detect it. Get a dilated eye exam at least once a year.

Live well today. See well tomorrow.

www.nei.nih.gov/diabetes
1-877-569-8474



National Eye Institute
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Common threads

- Vision taken for granted unless something goes wrong.
- Diabetes a major impetus for taking better care of self and eyes.
- Most positive about relationship with doctors.



Common threads (cont.)

- Lack of awareness/understanding of diabetic eye disease.
- Interest, concern about eye health and desire to have eyes examined.
- Importance of repeated messages about seeing an eye doctor to people with diabetes.



Diabetic eye disease resources

www.nei.nih.gov/NEHEP

Aproveche los beneficios de Medicare para la enfermedad diabética del ojo.

Si tiene diabetes, Medicare le ayudará a pagar los exámenes de los ojos. Aproveche los beneficios que pueden protegerle la vista.

La enfermedad diabética del ojo puede afectar a cualquier persona con diabetes. A menudo no hay síntomas ni dolor. Si no se detecta, puede causar una pérdida severa de la visión o incluso la ceguera.

Existe tratamiento para la enfermedad diabética del ojo. ¡Consulte a su oculista hoy mismo para hacerse un examen!

1-800-633-2273 Instituto Nacional del Ojo
www.medicare.gov/spanish/Overview.asp www.nei.nih.gov/health/ospand

Don't Lose Sight of Diabetic Eye Disease

Information for People With Diabetes



Watch out for your vision!

If you have diabetes, read this story.

Panel 1: Ahora le echaré unas gotitas. Cúbrame, estas gotas no duelen. Solo hacen que uno vea borroso por unas horas. Las gotas agordan la pupila para que yo pueda mirar dentro del ojo con una luz especial.

Panel 2: La enfermedad diabética del ojo muchas veces no presenta síntomas ni dolor. La persona no se da cuenta que se está quedando ciego hasta que ya es demasiado tarde.

Panel 3: ¿Y están bien los ojos de Carmen? Si, Carmen es muy cuidadosa. Viene por los menos una vez al año a hacerse este examen.

Panel 4: Doctor, ¿me puede dar esta enfermedad? ¿Puedo quedar ciego? Todas las personas con diabetes corren el riesgo de padecer de la enfermedad diabética del ojo. Pero al examen de los ojos con las pupilas dilatadas permite descubrir la enfermedad a tiempo, antes de que afecte el ojo. Podemos tratarla y evitar la ceguera.

Send an e-card to a loved one with diabetes.

You CAN do something about diabetic eye disease!

You can help prevent vision loss from diabetes.

National Eye Institute
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National Eye Institute, National Institutes of Health

Home » Diabetic Eye Disease

Information for *Healthy Vision*

Glaucoma Diabetic Eye Disease Low Vision Healthy Eyes

Get a dilated eye exam and keep your health on TRACK.

RELATED TOPICS

- How Much Do You Know?
- What You Should Know
- Protecting Your Vision
- Staying on TRACK
- Diabetic Eye Disease FAQs
- Watch out for your vision!
- Glossary
- Resources
- Español!

Diabetic Eye Disease

Diabetic eye disease has no warning signs. Finding and treating the disease early, before it causes vision loss or blindness, is the best way to control diabetic eye disease. If you have diabetes, make sure you get a dilated eye examination at least once a year.

Staying on TRACK

Think of all the beautiful things you wouldn't see if you lost your sight. If you have diabetes, get a dilated eye exam and keep your health on TRACK. [Read more...](#)

Diabetic Eye Disease FAQ

By taking good care of yourself through diet, exercise, and special medications, you can control diabetes. And diabetic eye disease, a complication of diabetes, can be treated before vision loss occurs. [Read more...](#)

RESOURCES

- What is a comprehensive dilated eye exam?
- Find an eye care professional
- Talk to your doctor
- Financial aid for eye care

Print this page

Diabetic Eye Disease: A Self-Guided Module

View this module and educate yourself, family, and friends about diabetic eye disease. This module includes descriptive audio and captioning.

Diabetic Eye Disease

AN EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

NATIONAL EYE HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAM



Stay engaged with NEHEP!

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NEI Healthy Eyes Quiz

Diabetes is the leading cause of new cases of blindness among adults ages 20 to 74.

True
False

www.nei.nih.gov/healthyeeyes

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NEI Healthy Eyes Quiz

You Chose True - correct

Answer

True. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 4 million people with diabetes ages 40 years or older had diabetic retinopathy. Download the [2011 National Diabetes Fact Sheet](#) for more information.

NEXT QUESTION >>

www.nei.nih.gov/healthyeeyes

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 Football, baseball, softball, soccer...There's more to lose than the game. Find fun facts about protective eyewear and use these resources with your team.
<http://catalog.nei.nih.gov/c-136-sports-related-eye-injury.aspx>

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National Eye Health Education Program
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<http://www.nei.nih.gov/health/financialaid.asp>

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<http://www.nei.nih.gov/nehep/>

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Questions?

For more resources, please visit
www.nei.nih.gov/nehep and www.nei.nih.gov/diabetes



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