

The Eyes Have It

Diabetes and Eye Disease



Blue Cross and Blue Shield
of New Mexico

Don't lose sight of diabetic eye disease

Of the 18 million people with diabetes in the United States, nearly half will develop some degree of diabetic eye disease. Do you know that diabetic eye disease is a leading cause of blindness?

To see if you have a perfect Eye-Q score, take the test and then read all the answers.

Eye-Q Quiz:

1. People with diabetes are more likely than people without diabetes to develop certain eye diseases.
 True False Unsure
2. Diabetic eye disease usually has early warning signs.
 True False Unsure
3. People with diabetes should have yearly eye examinations.
 True False Unsure
4. People with diabetes are at low risk for developing glaucoma.
 True False Unsure
5. Cataracts are common among people with diabetes.
 True False Unsure
6. People who have good control of their diabetes can get diabetic eye disease.
 True False Unsure
7. The risk of blindness from diabetic eye disease can be reduced.
 True False Unsure

Answers:

1. **True.** Diabetic eye disease includes diabetic retinopathy (a leading cause of blindness in adults), cataract, and glaucoma. The longer someone has diabetes, the more likely he or she will develop diabetic eye disease.
2. **False.** Often there are no warning signs in the early stages of the disease. Vision may not change until the disease becomes severe.
3. **True.** Everyone with diabetes should get an eye examination through dilated pupils at least once a year. Because diabetic eye disease usually has no symptoms, regular eye exams are important for early detection and timely treatment.
4. **False.** Glaucoma is almost twice as likely to occur in people with diabetes than in those without the disease.
5. **True.** People with diabetes are twice as likely to develop cataracts and to develop them at an earlier age than are those without diabetes.
6. **True.** Even with good control of blood glucose, there is still a risk of developing diabetic eye disease.



However, studies show that careful management of blood sugar levels slows the onset and progression of diabetic retinopathy.

7. **True.** With early detection and timely treatment, the risk of blindness from diabetic eye disease can be reduced.

Your Score: _____

If you got 6 or 7 right, congratulations. You know a lot about diabetic eye disease. If you missed some, you may wish to discuss this with your physician or eye doctor.

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