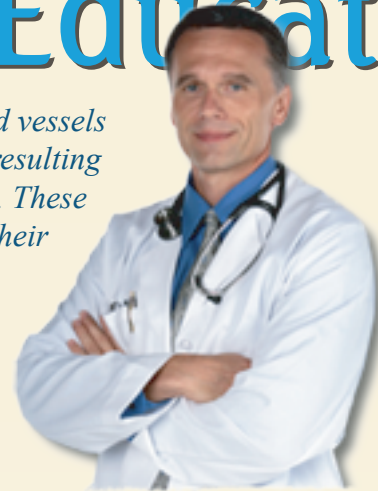# Diabetes Education

"Diabetes can cause the very small blood vessels in the eye to become fragile or blocked, resulting in damage that affects your ability to see. These eye problems may have no symptoms in their early, treatable stages, so... IT'S VERY IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO HAVE A COMPLETE EYE EXAM EVERY YEAR."

What can I do to prevent diabetes eye problems?

don't smoke

• Check and keep your blood glucose sugar and blood pressure as close to normal as you can.

• Have an ophthalmologist examine your eyes once a year.

• If you are pregnant see an eye care professional during your first 3 months.

• If you are planning to get pregnant, ask your doctor if you should have an eye exam.

Know your ABCs of diabetes:

reach your goals:

✓ EVERY 3-6 MONTHS
• **A1c**: Below 7%

✓ EVERY VISIT
• **Blood Pressure**: Below 130/80mmHg

✓ ONCE A YEAR
• **Cholesterol LDL**: Below 100mg/dL

Keep Your Eyes Healthy

How can diabetes hurt my eyes?

High blood glucose (sugar) and high blood pressure from diabetes can hurt four parts of your eye:

1. Retina: The retina is the lining at the back of the eye. The retina's job is to sense light coming into the eye.

2. Vitreous: The vitreous is a jelly-like fluid that fills the back of the eye.

3. Lens: The lens is at the front of the eye. It focuses light on the retina.

4. Optic nerve: The optic nerve is the eye's main nerve to the brain.
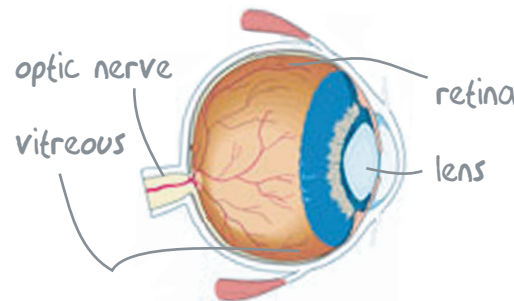
What can I do about diabetes retina problems?

First, check your blood glucose sugar and blood pressure as directed by your care team and keep as close to normal as you can.

Consult with your eye care professional. They may suggest laser treatment, which is when a light beam is aimed into the retina of the damaged eye. The beam closes off leaking blood vessels. It may stop blood and fluid from leaking into the vitreous. Laser treatment may slow the loss of sight.

If a lot of blood has leaked into your vitreous and your sight is poor, your eye care professional might suggest you have a surgery called a vitrectomy. A vitrectomy removes blood and fluids from the vitreous of your eye. Then clean fluid is put back into the eye. The surgery can make your eyesight better.

Better Living Now

"America's First Choice for Healthcare."