

NOVEMBER IS

Diabetic Eye Disease Awareness Month



Thirty million Americans have diabetes, and the American Diabetes Association estimates that more than seven million people in the U.S. aren't even aware they have the disease. In addition, about a quarter of diabetics suffer from diabetic retinopathy, an eye disease that can result in blindness.

Protecting Yourself Against Diabetes

Diabetes is one of the most prevalent diseases in the U.S. Adults and children alike can be affected due to ethnicity, genetic traits, and diet. Maintain a healthy lifestyle and see your physician annually to act preemptively towards diabetes.

Financial Costs

Diabetes costs the U.S. an estimated \$327 billion annually, with \$237 billion coming from direct medical costs and \$90 billion coming from decreased productivity. And with nearly 30 percent of diabetics suffering from diabetic retinopathy, it comes as no surprise that diabetes-related blindness costs can total more than \$500 million per year.

How It Effects Your Vision

Anyone with diabetes is at risk for developing diabetic retinopathy. This potentially blinding disease swells and blocks the blood vessels in your eyes. New, fragile vessels may form and burst, which could lead to severe vision loss or blindness.

Warning Signs

Diabetic retinopathy can develop without any of these symptoms beforehand so be consistent and be sure to schedule an eye exam once a year.

- Difficulty reading
- Blurry Vision
- Sudden loss of vision in one eye
- Seeing rings around lights
- Seeing dark spots or flashing lights

Diabetes and diabetic retinopathy take a toll on your wallet as well as your health. That's why early detection and early treatment are so critical.



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